DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 367 194 FL 800 715

AUTHOR	Cora, Marie T., Ed.; Wood, Nicole R., Ed.
TITLE	Adult Academy Volunteer Manual.
INSTITUTION	Brown Univ., Providence, RI. Adult Academy.
REPORT NO	93-10-506
PUB DATE	Sep 93
NOTE	84p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Adult Academy, Box 1974, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912 ($10).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adult Basic Education; *Adult Learning; *English (Second Language); Instructional Materials; Learning Activities; Lesson Plans; Literacy Education; Reading Instruction; Student Evaluation; Teaching Methods; *Tutoring; *Volunteers

ABSTRACT

This handbook was written specifically for volunteer tutors but is appropriate for teachers, student interns, coordinators, and others working with Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) adult learners. It presents an overview of adult and non-traditional education models, some principles of reading and writing, a "getting started" section, a section on lesson plans, descriptions of ABE and ESL literacy approaches and techniques, a learner evaluation section, and a section on activities and materials. (AB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 367 194

Adult Academy
Volunteer Manual

The Adult Academy
A Project of
The Howard R. Swearer Center for Public Service
Brown University
P.O. Box 1974
25 George Street
Providence, RI 02912
(401) 863-3986 v/tty

FL 800 715

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Marie T. Cora
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE.....1

INTRODUCTION.....3

MODELS OF EDUCATION.....7

READING AND WRITING.....13

GETTING STARTED.....17

LESSON PLANS.....25

ABE LITERACY APPROACHES.....37

ESL LITERACY APPROACHES.....45

EVALUATION.....55

TECHNIQUES AND ACTIVITIES.....65

CHOOSING MATERIALS.....83

PREFACE

The Adult Academy is a state-wide adult literacy and language education project with administrative offices at the Howard R. Swearer Center for Public Service at Brown University. The Academy is funded by the Rhode Island Department of Education, and the Rhode Island State Action Office.

The Adult Academy designs innovative programs to fill gaps in existing educational services, collaborating with other service providers whenever possible. We work with special needs populations including immigrants and refugees, senior citizens, the homeless, the developmentally disabled, the Deaf, pregnant and parenting teens, youth residing with DCYF, and adults in psychiatric care.

This handbook was written specifically for volunteer tutors, but it is appropriate for teachers, student interns, coordinators, and others working with ABE (Adult Basic Education) and ESL (English as a Second Language) adult learners. We have presented an overview of adult and non-traditional education models, some principals of reading and writing, a "getting started" section, a section on lesson plans, ABE and ESL literacy approaches and techniques, learner evaluation, and a section on activities and materials.

Many people contributed to this effort. The first edition of this manual was principally written by Janet Isserlis, with considerable input from Andrew Gross, Pat Farley, Sally Gabb, volunteers, learners, and staff members of the Adult Academy. The second edition includes contributions from a number of people including staff, volunteers and learners. Nicole Wood edited and revised several sections of this manual. Marie Cora edited and revised the entire second edition.

If you would like to be on our mailing list or for more information contact Marie T. Cora Project Director, The Adult Academy, P.O. Box 1974, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912 (401) 863-3986 v/tdd.

September 1993

INTRODUCTION

Learner-Centered Education

The Adult Academy advocates a learner-centered educational approach. This approach takes into account the specific culture, background, personal experience, and immediate needs of the program participant. Adult literacy learners come from a wide range of areas geographically, professionally and personally. Learners come from countries as different as the U.S., Guatemala, El Salvador, Colombia, Cambodia, Taiwan, Poland, and Malaysia. Some people are learning to read for the first time. Some are learning not only to read, but also to speak English. Learners are married, single, widowed, divorced, older, younger, working, unemployed, homeless, parents, relatives, physically challenged and all are motivated to learn. Some people have had no previous education in this or any other country; others have had negative experiences with schooling while others have had their educations interrupted due to family or economic constraints. Still others have had extensive education in their home country and are professionally trained, but lack English language skills.

Because learners come from such diverse experiences, they all have their own ideas about what "being literate" means. For one person, being literate might mean being able to read the newspaper, for another, it might mean being able to fill out job application forms, for another, it might mean being able to communicate, both verbally and on paper, with her child's school teacher. Literacy, then, exists in many forms for many people; in fact, educators increasingly speak of many literacies. This idea -- that there are many literacies -- requires an examination and consideration of learners' views of literacy.

Two overriding assumptions shape learner-centered practice: *Literacy exists within a sociocultural context* (being literate means different things in different situations), and *classroom content is driven by learners' needs* (GED preparation is different from workplace education which is different from learning basic oral and written English skills). Teaching practice divides into two broad strands: *recurring events* (such as generation of weekly classroom news, journal writing, and other language activities which become regular, ongoing classroom events) from which *themes* evolve (family, health, job, banking, etc).

Language Awareness

Many learners come to literacy programs with ideas about what learning and literacy are all about. For example, many people think that reciting after the teacher constitutes learning how to speak the language, that copying from the blackboard will teach them to write, and that memorizing grammar rules will help them to learn the language. In our classrooms, however, we try to help learners understand that language and literacy mean many different things, and that the drills

mentioned above are certainly not going to help them acquire language skills quickly and easily. It is our task to help learners see that language is directly linked with the social and cultural functions which it serves, and to help learners work away from a teacher-centered methodology towards more active and participatory learning.

As learners begin to work the language in different ways and gain experience with different kinds of literacy, they begin to become aware of their own strengths and strategies for getting along in the language-rich world. These strengths and strategies need to be built upon in the language classroom so that learners recognize their skills, and become more independent in their own learning process. This "learning how to learn" helps people become conscious of their own skills and abilities, and shows them their progress in learning.

Learning Styles

How do you learn a language? How do you learn new things -- like setting up a computer, driving a standard car, using a fax machine, filling out tax forms? Do you prefer to read instructions, to have them read to you? Do you prefer to learn by yourself, making mistakes and troubleshooting as you go? Do you like to learn by watching others and asking questions?

Understanding your own styles and preferences will help you to consider the range of styles and preferences among learners.

American education tends to be very competitive. Individual work and achievement are valued greatly. Group work is only a means toward an end in many American schools. Among many other cultures, however, learning and doing cooperatively is both means and end -- a way in which to accomplish a task that would usually not be completed alone. For many of our learners, reading and writing does happen collaboratively. It is important to understand how group support sustains learning.

Through attentive listening and observation we can learn how each learner interacts with print and language. We don't always need to see an individual 'product' (a written dictation, a worksheet, some homework) in order to understand how a learner accomplished what she did. We can see who turns to whom, who looks in their notebook or at posters or print in the room in order to find a needed word.

There are many questions to consider. Who sits with whom? How does a learner respond to your request that she read a passage to you alone? That she read to the others? We need to understand the difference between learning/reading and performance.

Part of the education process for many of us has been about displaying what we know, showing the teacher and classmates we are paying attention by raising our hands and always filling in every answer on test forms -- even if we are guessing. For our learners, display may be frightening or it may be irrelevant. Therefore, we need to understand our own learning/educational background in terms of the contexts in which it occurs and know that it may be quite different from the learning needs and styles of our learners.

Participatory Education

Adult learners bring a wealth of skills, experience, and knowledge about the world to the language classroom -- they already know how to do many things. Most learners come to class with very clear reasons for learning to read and write, and to speak English. Therefore, *learners' experiences, needs and concerns dictate the content of the lesson*. Part of the ongoing work between learners and volunteers or teachers is finding out about learners' own uses of reading and writing, and the many reasons they want to learn.

The learning process is enhanced when learners and teachers work together from strengths each possesses, when learners and the learning process are valued, and when community is established among learners and teachers.

As you get to know the learners you'll be working with, you'll find that a certain bond develops between and/or among you. This bonding is very important in building a community of learners who trust and support each other in their common goals of learning to read and write. Their reasons for learning may vary greatly, but their motivation to learn is consistently strong. Because learners' reasons for wanting to learn are such strong motivating factors, a *learner-centered* approach to literacy learning is most useful in helping to build community with learners.

Questions for reflection

•What types of roles have you had in the classroom(s) you've worked in? (as a learner, a tutor, a teacher, etc.).

•How have you felt in these roles?

•What kinds of interaction would you like to have with learners in the classroom?

•What kind of support do you think you will need?

MODELS OF EDUCATION

Traditional Versus Learner-Centered Education

Traditional education often involves a *banking approach* in which teachers deposit their knowledge and skills into the students. The teacher decides what is of value and when it should be deposited. In *learner-centered education*, a facilitator helps learners define their goals, pursue the knowledge and skills they need, and works with them to achieve their goals. Traditional education focuses on memorization; learner-centered education focuses on communication, critical thinking and action. Traditional education focuses on preserving the status quo; learner-centered education focuses on learning new skills to meet concrete needs, and perhaps in challenging existing systems. The following contrasts the two approaches:

Traditional Education	Learner-Centered Education
• The teacher determines the goals	• The learner determines the goals with the teacher or facilitator.
• The teacher is knowledgeable and the students are ignorant.	• The facilitators and learners all have useful knowledge and skills.
• The teacher gives knowledge and skills, and the students receive them.	• Facilitator and learners collaborate in the acquisition of knowledge and skills.
• The students memorize and store the knowledge and skills for future use.	• The learners apply the knowledge and skills in the pursuit of their own daily and long term goals.
• The teacher talks and the students listen.	• The facilitator and learners discuss issues together.
• Learning prepares students to fit in and adapt.	• Learning develops learners' ability to speak up and think critically.
• The teacher directs the class and the students comply.	• The facilitator and learners jointly decide the direction of class sessions.
• The education process perpetuates the status quo.	• The new education process helps create new realities.

Adapted from: Literacy for Empowerment: A Resource Handbook for Community Based Educators (1988). Association for Community Based Education, Washington, D.C.

Learner-Centered Education: Three Approaches
There are numerous approaches in adult education that follow a learner-centered model. Three of the most effective are outlined below. The Problem-Posing Approach helps people to identify and tackle conflicts found in everyday living. The Task-Based Approach asks learners to complete bits of work relevant to their daily experience. Both the Problem-Posing and Task-Based Approaches use a Participatory Approach which advocates group work and the use of learners' background knowledge and prior experiences.

THE PROBLEM-POSING APPROACH
In problem-posing education, learners and volunteers work together to determine learners' needs, identify skills learners have and skills they need to develop, and define goals. Problem-posing focuses on the development of literacy and critical thinking skills by taking action in order to change certain situations. A strong emphasis on group work to identify problems, come up with coping strategies or solutions, and take steps to implement these strategies or solutions characterizes problem-posing education. Language and literacy work are contextualized within the processes described below.

A Guide to Problem Posing
The process is a simple one:

1. Using a photograph, drawing, text, or first-hand experience, focus on an area which may present conflict or problems
2. Discuss the experience
3. Identify and name the problem(s)
4. Discuss it
5. Find out more about it
6. Work with others to understand it
7. Think of actions to change the situation
8. Think about results/consequences of actions
9. Take action to make concrete change

Consider these examples:
•Learners want to learn how to dispute errors in house bills.
•Learners want to find a job.

Identifying Common Problems
Once a conflict has been identified, these steps can be used as an outline as a way to approach the problem:

1. Naming: what is happening?
2. How do people with this problem feel?
3. Have you had a problem like this? Has anyone you know ever had this problem? What did you/they do?
4. Why did this happen? What are the reasons for this kind of problem?
5. What can be done?

•Disputing an error in an electric bill, for example, involves many skills including reading, computation, oral communication, and writing; use of phone or written correspondence; critical thinking and negotiating skills; familiarity with the system of contacting the electric company, to name a few.

•What are some of the conflicts or problems you can identify in searching for a job? What are some activities or strategies learners can use to approach tackling these problems?

Finding Resources and Taking Action
After identifying the problems attached to daily experiences such as disputing errors in bills or finding a job, learners can work together to build on what they already know about these problems, and find out what they need to know more about. Through this process, generating possible avenues for action can be identified and pursued. These questions can help you with the process of taking action to solve the problem:

1. What do you need to know?
2. Who can you work with?
3. Where can you get more information?
4. What are possible actions that can be taken?
5. What might be the results?

Evaluating your actions
After taking action, these questions can be used as a guide to help evaluate the skills learned and the process used to solve the conflict:

1. What new information did we learn?
2. What do we understand better?
3. What did I learn about myself?
4. What did we learn about how we learn as a group?
5. What was the result or impact of the action?
6. Can we address the causes better now?
7. What new problems did we uncover?

For more on Problem Posing, see ESL for Action by Elsa Roberts Auerbach and Nina Wallerstein (1987). Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.

THE TASK-BASED APPROACH

Tasks are bits of work that people complete everyday. Tasks can include small things, for example, brushing your teeth, buying a cup of coffee, greeting your co-workers, or larger, more complex things like baking a cake, writing a book report, calling the operator for telephone number information, or learning to drive. Evaluating a task is relatively easy: each task inherently reveals how successfully the task was completed (are your shoes still tied or have they come untied?; did your co-workers greet you in return or did they misunderstand you?; have you completed the book report, is the page still blank, or did the teacher return it to you as unacceptable?; did you pass your driving test?). The results can tell you to what degree you have been successful in completing your task.

Tasks provide a purpose for a classroom activity which go beyond the practice of language for its own sake.[1] This allows the focus of the language learning to be on the *content* (getting the message across) and not on the *form* (correct grammar). Consider the following definition of task:

> ...any structured language learning endeavour which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task. 'Task' is therefore assumed to refer to a range of workplans which have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning -- from the simple and brief exercise type, to more complex and lengthy activities such as group problem-solving or simulations and decision making.[2]

Below are some examples of tasks used in language learning:

- following instructions, either by listening or reading
- completing a worksheet
- making a name tag
- practicing filling out deposit or withdrawal slips
- role playing a tenant and landlord arguing about a needed repair
- reading a schedule and taking the bus
- writing a resume and cover letter for a job

Tasks can be used in conjunction with problem posing, and often, they are completed in a group process. A task can be completed as a five-minute activity, or it may be a two-week project. Tasks have a particular purpose and so are more interesting -- learners can make meaning of their work through the task rather than learn by memorizing rules or copying vocabulary.

---

[1]Richards, J., J. Platt, and H. Weber. 1986. *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics*. London: Longman.

[2]Breen, M. 1987. Learner contributions to task design. In C. Candlin and D. Murphy (Eds.) *Language Learning Tasks*. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hall.

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

A participatory approach to adult education encourages learners to draw on themselves and each other in finding ways to work on tasks or solve particular problems. They work together to find new information in order to gain new learning. In participatory learning, the volunteer's role is to help facilitate the group effort, encouraging learners to help each other, often deflecting learners' questions back to other learners. (If someone asks the tutor the meaning of a particular word, for example, the tutor might then ask other learners if they know what that word means).

Consider these examples:

- Learners want to be able to use the bank.
- Learners want to learn how to use public transportation.

- Learning to use the bank involves many different skills including reading, writing, communication, and computation skills; familiarity with some banking terminology; ability to understand and fill out forms such as desposit or withdrawal slips, etc. Some learners may have experience using the bank in this or their native country. Learners with (and without) this experience can talk about what skills and knowledge they need in order to successfully use the bank, and compile a list of the skills and knowledge to be worked on.

- Learning to use public transportation involves knowing how to read bus schedules and street signs, being familiar with the geographic area, and perhaps being able to use the telephone which involves good listening and communication skills. Learners can discuss their experiences using public transportation, both successes and failures, and brainstorm a list of skills needed to use the transportation system. From this, learners can generate a list of strategies they can practice in order to learn these skills.

Sometimes participatory learning includes a task-based approach or the problem-posing process explained above. A participatory approach fosters cooperative learning among students and a constant awareness on the part of the tutor and learners that the learning process is one in which everyone has something to contribute to the rest of the group.

These models can be used separately or in combination. Most often, you may find that by combining these three approaches, you will be offering your learners a range of options in terms of their needs, learning styles, and goals.

READING AND WRITING

Reading and writing are processes of deriving meaning from print. They are connected processes; in order to read, something needs to have been written, and in order to write, there needs to be a reader.

Reading

As you read this page, you may have certain expectations about what will be written here. You know that this is a handbook about literacy learning, and so you expect to see words like 'literate', 'reading' and 'writing' frequently. You expect to learn about the learning process, and about adult education. You think about what you already know about learning, and you relate your own experience to the reading you do. This use of previous knowledge and experience, predicting and expecting has to do with a *schema*, or framework, you already have in your mind about the topic at hand.

Schema helps us read, by allowing us to use what we know to process what we encounter in print. Good readers use schema all the time, unconsciously. We don't read each and every word, sounding it out, but we move our eyes quickly across a page.

When we first learned to read, many of us learned with a *phonics*-based approach. Our teachers taught us the letters of the alphabet, and their corresponding sounds. We sounded out words, but we also read very simple sentences, because our teachers wanted to help us learn to read words in a meaningful context. This *whole language* approach recognizes that it is difficult to learn words if the words are not arranged in some way that has meaning that we can remember. For example, read this next line only once:

There fast how not some very staples table next before green.

How much of what you just read do you remember? Chances are that you've remembered very little, and you may have just gone back to re-read the sentence, because it made no sense. It was just a string of words. Similarly, sentences like, "Pat, put that hat on the cat at bat," are not terribly useful (particularly to adults) because they contain little connection to adults' experiences nor do they contain meaningful information. Although the sentence does a good job of drilling *-at* sounds, it may not help someone to make meaning from print.

Good readers infer and predict all the time: they guess what might happen next based on clues from the text; good readers seek meaning from text. Reading is really a combination of looking, understanding that letters represent sounds which represent words, understanding those words, and connecting them in order to make sense of those words. We read for many purposes: to find out how to put something together by reading instructions, to see what time or day it is (reading a clock or calendar), to see what's on TV or at the movies, to find out about someone far away (reading a letter), to see how much money we owe someone (reading a bill), or to see what happens at the end of the story.

Writing
When we write we generate some of the same information mentioned in the section above on reading. Our purposes for writing may also include letting someone know where or how we are, (leaving a note, writing a letter), passing along a telephone message, complaining about a mistake in a bill, signing a pay check, filling out an insurance form, writing a check or money order.

ThespacesbetweenwordstheirsizeandarrangementonapageandvariouspunctuationmarksalsohelpustodealwiththevisualimageofprintNewreadersmaynotbeawareofspacesbetweenwordsoruseofcapitallettersorotherkindsofpunctuationwhentheybeginwriting

The spaces between words, their size and arrangement on a page and various punctuation marks also help us to deal with the visual image of print. New readers may not be aware of spaces between words, or use of capital letters or other kinds of punctuation when they begin writing. Many learners like to copy passages from a book or blackboard; their orientation to the use of the page and the line for writing will tell you a great deal about their ability and experience with writing.

Reading and Understanding
We use schema, knowledge of print conventions (punctuation, capitalization, etc.) and phonics to make sense of what we read.

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow:

A Pardstan Giberter for Farfie

Glis was very fraper. She had denarpen Farfie's pardstan. She didn't talp a giberter for him. So she conlanted to plimp a pardstan binky for him. She had just sparved in the binky when he jibbed in the gorger.

"Clorsty Pardstan!" she boffed.

"That's a croustish pardstan binky," boffed Farfie, "but my pardstan is on Jenstan. Agstan is Kelstan."

"In that ruspen," boffed Glis, "I won't whank you your giberter until Jenstan."

1. Who was very fraper?

2. Did Glis talp a giberter for Farfie?

3. What happened after she had just sparved in the binky?

4. What did she boff at first?

5. What did Farfie boff in reply?

6. When is Glis planning to whank his giberter?

Because you know how writing is structured, and you used cues like punctuation, subjects and objects (who said or did what to whom), you could probably answer all the questions correctly. But what was the story about? What's a ruspen? What's fraper? We know fraper is an adjective because it followed the word very. We suspect that boff means said, because it followed words in quotation marks. But what about non-native speakers of English, or people with little prior experience with such school-like questions?

Some people with previous experiences with school understand the kinds of comprehension questions you just answered, and like you, can answer them correctly. Students with little experience in such question and answer activity may have trouble not only answering the questions, but more importantly in focusing on the main idea(s) of the reading. Without discussion into the heart of a story, it is possible that some learners might not follow everything they read. Before learners are asked to respond to questions about specific, isolated details of a reading, it is important that they discuss what the reading is about overall.

With both native and non-native speakers of English, it's important to encourage learners to talk about what they read.

Reading and Writing in the Classroom and Beyond:
What Learners See, Say, Read and Write

Very beginning level ESL learners need a combination of work on phonics and exposure to high frequency (often used) *sight words*, such as name, date, address, Providence, Cranston, Rhode Island, exit, emergency, etc. The language experience approach (see Techniques and Activities) is very useful for helping people use the spoken English that they already know and begin to write and read, using their own words. They come to recognize certain sight words, and also begin to understand the connection between the letters of the alphabet, their sounds, and the ways they combine together to form words.

Some Hints

•Using the immediate surroundings -- signs around the learning center, in the classroom, etc. -- as well as asking learners to talk about the reading and writing they do everyday, are helpful ways of learning about their reading and writing abilities, and about what they want to learn.

•Listening to and writing learners' stories (through the language experience approach) helps learners to get to know more about each other, and also helps you learn about their lives as well as their abilities with language and literacy.

As you continue to read through this manual, you'll find suggestions for working with literacy learners at all levels. One helpful thing to remember is that <u>people learn to read once</u>. Learning to read a <u>second</u> language consists of transferring one's understanding of the reading process to another language (and sometimes another alphabet). The principal process of reading (as discussed above) is the same in any language. ESL learners will be learning to read in English for the most part, but some may choose to learn to read in their native language. Learners who already speak English will be learning to read and write many words with which they are familiar. For both native English speakers and ESL learners, learning to read and write is a process that takes time. Your patience and encouragement will be greatly appreciated by the learners with whom you work, and plays a critical role in helping them maintain motivation and energy.

GETTING STARTED

Who are the Volunteer Tutors?

The Adult Academy attracts people with many different backgrounds, skills, and goals. Some volunteers come to the Adult Academy to gain exposure to various communities in the Greater Providence area, while others approach the Academy with very specific teaching agendas. The Adult Academy is eager to work with people who are completely new to the field of adult education, as well as with experienced educators. We encourage people to value their own talents and knowledge, and draw from one another's experiences instead of relying solely on the "field experts."

The Adult Academy utilizes the volunteer efforts of area university and college students, and community members. This volunteer support is vital to the survival of our programs; volunteers teach in and/or coordinate programs.

Choosing a Program/Program Structure

There are several programs from which to choose if you wish to become a volunteer with the Adult Academy. Many people have specific interests and goals, while others know they want to learn about adult education, but don't know how to start. Listed below are several questions to ask yourself when trying to decide on a program that's right for you:

- Do you prefer to teach in an ABE program or an ESL program?
- Would you like to work with adults, teenagers or children?
- Would you rather tutor/facilitate a small group of learners or work one-to-one with an individual?
- Are you interested in learning about a specific community in Providence?
- Are you interested in working with a specific language minority group in Providence?

It is also a good idea to assess your own goals and talents:

- What interests you about being a tutor?
- What do you think the experience will be like?
- What experiences do you bring?
- What do you hope to learn during the training sessions?
- What do you expect to learn from tutoring?
- Have you tutored or been tutored before?
- What do you think your learners will want/need to learn?
- What defines a good teacher?

Program structure varies from program to program, but is loosely based on one model; each program has its own coordinator whose responsibilities include some of the following:

- Helping volunteers outline their criteria, expectations, and responsibilities
- Recruiting and selecting volunteers
- Training volunteers
- Supporting and supervising volunteers
- Maintaining records of all program information
- Communicating with Adult Academy staff, site contacts, and volunteer tutors

Because the Adult Academy stresses a participatory approach in the development and maintenance of all of its programs, it is important that volunteers, coordinators, and Adult Academy staff put forth the effort to share all relevant and insightful information with one another. We can then provide the best possible opportunities to the several hundred people we reach every year. There will be many opportunities both formal and informal during the semester to meet with coordinators and volunteer tutors.

Who are the Learners?

ESL learners come to Providence from all over the world for political, economic and/or personal reasons. Over 70 languages are spoken in Providence, including Spanish, Portuguese, French-Creole, Russian, and Vietnamese. The ESL learners range in age from 16 to over 60 in our adult ESL programs, and from 9 to 15 in the two in-school ESL programs. People come to the programs for many different reasons: to become more involved with their children's schooling, to find a job/better job, to gain citizenship, or to overcome the cultural and language barriers which prevent many ESL learners from funtioning in various day-to-day activities, such as banking, grocery shopping, using the phone, riding the bus, etc.

It is important to acknowledge and think about the reasons behind learners' decisions to attend ESL classes. While the primary motive of course is to acquire literacy skills and to learn English, there are other factors and issues which the ESL tutor will need to be aware of before going into the classroom. In order for tutors and learners to be comfortable with each other, it will be necessary to recognize, be sensitive to, and respect differences in culture and socioeconomic status. The reasons for doing so may become more apparent as the year progresses, but you are encouraged to think about and discuss these differences with other tutors, coordinators and staff members of the Adult Academy and Swearer Center for Public Service whenever possible. Many ESL learners experience cultural, economic or linguistic discrimination, so it is important to create a safe and comfortable environment for your learners.

Learners in our Adult Basic Education programs also have diverse backgrounds and experiences. Some have never finished school and are now going back; some are studying now because school did not offer them the opportunities they were looking for or needed; other learners are homeless or in transition and are unable to attend other more formal programs. The Writers' Groups participants are recruited through senior citizens' centers and a mental health facility. The Deaf Literacy Program offers classroom instruction in basic English literacy skills to adult learners who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing. Learners enrolled in the Partners in Education

(PIE) Program are young women working towards obtaining their General Education Diploma (GED). Learners in the Developmentally Disabled Program work on basic literacy and computer skills.

Through these programs, the Adult Academy is able to provide many different learning environments to various special needs populations in the Greater Providence area. We collaborate with other agencies and individual community members to design innovative programs which best meet the needs of their participants.

Curriculum Guidelines

A curriculum is a guide to organizing a course of study. Learners actively and consistently contribute to the development of the curriculum. One way to approach this planning process is by looking at the entire semester, which is generally 12 weeks long, and asking yourself and your learners what should happen during the 12 week cycle. While the tutor/teacher/coordinator is ultimately responsible for articulating the needs of the program, it is the learners' needs which, when assessed, shape the most important part of the curriculum. This is called a *learner-centered curriculum*, a curriculum which focuses on the learners' needs and life-experiences. By asking your learners what is important to them, by encouraging them to play an active role in the development of curriculum, and by treating the tutor-learner relationship as a partnership in which the role of the learner is seen as significant and important, you will be well prepared to design a learner-centered curriculum.

Tutors and teachers organize literacy activity around *themes* and *topics* according to learners' needs, interests and concerns. These themes and topics generally emerge during conversations held at the beginning of class sessions. Such conversations frequently raise questions or issues that learners wish to discuss or to know more about. The facilitator generally invites learners to share whatever they might know about a topic at hand; it is especially important to begin a lesson or conversation with a topic the learner is already familiar with, rather than introduce a subject that is completely foreign to your learners. In every instance, the learners' knowledge is a good place to start. You'll find that there are some themes and topics which work better than others. Listed below are several themes that past tutors and teachers have used successfully:

- Family
- Work
- Hobbies/Leisure time
- Love/Dating
- Food

What do these themes have in common with each other? Why have these themes continued to work in the ABE and ESL classroom? Are these appropriate topics to discuss with your learners? What about other important things, like grammar, survival skills, reading and writing? The point is not to sit in the classroom idly conversing with your students about the weather or their favorite ice cream flavor,

although initially learners might need some time to become comfortable and talk about 'safe' topics. As you come to know each other better, themes will emerge; it is through a particular theme that you can begin to work on different skill areas, such as reading, writing, or listening, with your learners. These themes work particularly well because most people have something to say about at least one of these topics, whether it's a funny tale about an old girlfriend, a detailed description of their current job, or an old family recipe. For example, if "Family" is the week's theme, there are several activities you can plan for your students which are relevant to the theme and also address different skill areas:

- Define/discuss vocabulary: brother, sister, mother, father, grandparent, cousin, sibling, wife, best friend, etc.
- Make a family tree: ask students to design a family tree by writing the names of family members on paper; the names can accompany drawn pictures or photographs. Be creative!
- Show-and-Tell: ask students to bring in presents/objects given to them by family members or close friends. Ask students to describe and talk about their objects.
- Write: ask students to construct sentences that include new vocabulary, i.e. *My brother is five years old and his name is John.*
- Develop generative questions around the idea of family:
  - What is a family?
  - Who do you consider a family member?
  - How do you think American families are similar/different from families in your country?
  - Who cooks in your family?
  - What responsibilities do you have to your family?

The First Day of Class

Where is class held?

The typical adult learning center/classroom/facility is often found in an unused schoolroom during evening hours, in a church basement, at a library table, and sometimes in a learner's kitchen or livingroom. Some spaces have large chalkboards or newsprint pads. In other places the tutor and learners share a pad of lined paper and maybe some books or worksheets. What makes adult learning situations special is the exchange between tutors and learners. The literacy learning process is dynamic. People ask questions, get frustrated, solve problems, figure things out -- at a small table, at desks and chairs, on sofas, on benches.

Getting to know your learners

Walking into a roomful of strangers can be an awkward and intimidating experience. You're bound to be a little nervous, or maybe excited, on your first day. Remember, the learners probably feel just as awkward and intimidated as you do, if not more. If you're like most people, you will probably have lots of questions about your first day of class:

- Do I need to plan a lesson?
- I know nothing about my learners, so how am I supposed to plan a lesson without yet knowing what their interests and needs are?
- What if they don't like the lesson I have planned?

These questions are all valid. The best thing to do on the first day of class is to come prepared with a lesson or two; prepare an array of activities and lessons to choose from so you won't be empty-handed on the first day of class. Here is a list of ice-breaking questions to ask your learners:

- What is your name?
- Where are you from?
- How long have you been in the US?
- How long have you been in Providence?
- Do you like the US?
- Do you like Providence?
- Do you work?
- Do you have children?
- What are your interests/hobbies?
- What would you like to learn from this class?

Also be prepared to share your own personal information; it would be unfair to ask your students to share such personal information without doing the same.

Here is a sample lesson plan from the first day of a beginner ESL class:

Lesson Plan: Beginner I

Goals: To get to know one another.
To become comfortable in the classroom.
To assess skills and needs of learners.

Materials: tape, map, Brown Univ. stuff, magazines

I. Names and announcements
- attendance-then go around circle with names
- name game with ball (or thumper)
- go over times and dates of classes, encourage them to bring notebooks andpens or pencils

II. Where are you from
- present map, have learners come up individually and point to where they are from
- review vocabualry, have learners ask each other, write on chalk board (have them copy)

III. Let's talk about me
- talk about myself, present various Brown paraphenalia
- some hobby/activity vocabualry-work, study, movies, t.v., reading
- encourage questions, if possible break up and do pair interviews

IV. Needs assessment
- **what do you want to learn about?**
- **possible options-job, school , bank, supermarket, library, transportation**

Here is what the tutor had to say about the class when it was over:

Evaluation: The first class went well, and actually stayed remarkably on schedule. The learners were at a very, very basic level. They were unable to respond when I asked them what their names were. Therefore I spent the first 45 minutes to an hour going over "What's your name?" and "Where are you from?" They were receptive to the name game as well. The most difficult part of the class was the needs assessment. As the learners really understood no English, they had trouble grasping what I was asking them. However, they ulimately understood and cited the alphabet, shopping, and work as subjects they were interested in. Basically, the straightforward minimal conversation practice was most effective as any activity that was more complex just lost them.

More Suggestions for Volunteer Tutors

Clearly, there is no one best method through which learning and teaching occurs. Flexibility, creativity, patience, and a willingness to take risks will help you to learn what works best for you and your learners. A participatory, learner-centered approach to literacy learning is one in which the needs and concerns of learners are primary and dialogue about their interests and goals form the curriculum. Here are some additional reminders:

1. Allow for flexibility in lesson planning. Learners' attendance is sometimes fluid. Be prepared to change plans when attendance is low. If you plan a lesson for a particular learner, have a backup plan in case that learner can't attend the session on that particular day.

2. Remember learners' goals and check with learners from time to time about changes in their goals. Your role is to facilitate learning for students. Sometimes this means guiding learners through a complicated worksheet, at other times it means helping people learn to ask better questions, at yet other times it may mean listening to people reading aloud and answering questions.

3. Do not overemphasize grammar or isolated skills. Grammatical explanations may help when asked for, but it is not helpful to explain something <u>about</u> a language when a person does not understand much of the language. <u>Speak the language; don't speak about the language</u>. Rather, give clear examples and explanations in real contexts.

4. Consider your coordinators, other tutors and learners as your personal resources for teaching ideas and support. Talk to each other, share ideas, learn from each other.

5. Make each session as relaxed and comfortable as possible. Building a good relationship is the foundation for a positive experience for both you and your learner. A good relationship is fostered in an environment of trust and acceptance. Do not try to impose your feelings, attitudes, or values on the student. Rather, accept each learner for herself or himself.

6. Some learners may have emotional, social, or family issues which could affect their work. Occasionally, learners confide in tutors about personal, financial, domestic problems. Tutors are not expected to act as social service providers. Should a learner ask for help, a tutor may offer to investigate appropriate service agencies through which the learner can find a solution to her or his problem. If a situation like this arises, please bring it to the attention of the Program Coordinator and/or Project Director. The Adult Academy does not recommend tutors or teachers taking on learners' problems. Is is important to respect learners' privacy, and to assist in directing learners to appropriate agencies as the need arises. During the training sessions, tutors might wish to discuss potential problems in order to devise effective strategies for helping learners find solutions to particular problems when or if they arise.

These guidelines will help to make your tutoring experience valuable, successful, and fun for you and for your learners.

Sample Curriculum

Week	Goals	Activities	Content Areas
1	*learning about each other *setting tone *assessment: level/needs	name games, grids pair & group interviews dialogue journals set regular literacy activities (i.e. discuss/write: how was your day?)	personal information (name, address, country/community)
2	*learning about each other *looking for content areas *setting goals	language experience stories interviews/grids dialogue journals regular activities	personal information family, work, neighborhood, coming to US
3-4	*choosing content areas *building skills & vocab. *learning about each other	reading based on class information grids and stories language experience stories dialogue journals regular activities	Sample Content Areas: Entertainment Work/Unemployment Community Resources Shopping: food, clothes Money Neighborhoods School & Kids Home Country Doctor/Body/Health Reading Newspapers
5-7	*building skills & vocab. *choose new content areas *sharing info. and resources		
	*evaluation	inter-group interviews: past materials informal tests: past material (learners choose areas for test based on past goals)	
8-13	repeat week 3-7	gather material for group book xerox during week, staple in class	
14	*review	read learners' book - celebrate!!	

Tatlock/Gross/91

LESSON PLANS

Keeping lesson plans is an important part of assessment and evaluation. Without lesson plans, there is no record of what has been done during class. We have already looked briefly at the lesson plan below in the section on ***GETTING STARTED***. The lesson plan begins with the general goals the volunteer wanted to accomplish during that class; a list of the materials needed for the exercises she had planned; and an outline of the activities and how they would be performed.

Lesson Plan: Beginner I

Goals: To get to know one another.
To become comfortable in the classroom.
To assess skills and needs of learners.

Materials: tape, map, Brown Univ. stuff, magazines

I. Names and announcements
- attendance-then go around circle with names
- name game with ball (or thumper)
- go over times and dates of classes, encourage them to bring notebooks andpens or pencils

II. Where are you from
- present map, have learners come up individually and point to where they are from
- review vocabualry, have learners ask each other, write on chalk board (have them copy)

III. Let's talk about me
- talk about myself, present various Brown paraphenalia
- some hobby/activity vocabualry-work, study, movies, t.v., reading
- encourage questions, if possible break up and do pair interviews

IV. Needs assessment
- what do you want to learn about?
- possible options-job, school , bank, supermarket, library, transportation

In addition, the lesson plan includes the volunteer's evaluation of her class: how she felt the class went in general, what the overall language level was like, how she decided to proceed with the planned activities, what the difficulties were.

Evaluation: The first class went well, and actually stayed remarkably on schedule. The learners were at a very, very basic level. They were unable to respond when I asked them what their names were. Therefore I spent the first 45 minutes to an hour going over "What's your name?" and "Where are you from?" They were receptive to the name game as well. The most difficult part of the class was the needs assessment. As the learners really understood no English, they had trouble grasping what I was asking them. However, they ulimately understood and cited the alphabet, shopping, and work as subjects they were interested in. Basically, the straightforward minimal conversation practice was most effective as any activity that was more complex just lost them.

Keeping careful lesson plans is particularly important for Adult Academy programs because volunteers often share classes. For example, a class that meets Monday and Wednesday may have one volunteer tutor on Monday, and a different one on Wednesday. In addition to meeting regularly to discuss the class, volunteers must keep lesson plans and file them at the Adult Academy so that tutors who share a class will know what has been covered, what successes and difficulties arose, and how to proceed in the next lesson. This also helps tutors who share a class to avoid repeating lessons.

Other important purposes for keeping careful lesson plans include:

- Keeping track of what happens in the classroom or with the learner over time
- Helping to build a consistent curriculum
- Keeping track of materials and approaches that have been used; what has worked well and what has not been very effective
- Helping volunteers keep track of their own progress -- noting levels of comfort or confidence; identifying difficulties and questions
- Providing documentation and resources for future volunteers and classes

Following are some examples of lesson plan forms, both blank and filled out. These are only suggestions -- we encourage volunteers to create lesson plan formats which suit their individual working styles.

ADULT ACADEMY TUTOR'S LOG

LEARNERS:		
TUTOR:	DATE/TIME/SITE:	
GOALS:	MATERIALS:	ACTIVITIES:
COMMENTS:	COMMENTS:	COMMENTS:
OUT OF CLASS ACTIVITIES:		
LEARNERS' RESPONSES:	TUTOR'S EVALUATION/IDEAS:	

28

29

THIS FORM HAS BEEN ADAPTED FROM ONE PRODUCED BY ALBSU.

Gross/91 Adult Academy

TUTOR WEEKLY SUMMARY SHEET

Tutor Name:

Client Name:

Date of session: Place: __home __library

other:

Length of session:

Session objectives:

Materials:

Lesson Plan (activities, points to discuss, review topics, etc.)

Comments on lesson plan:

Tutor self-evaluation:

Evaluation of client progress:

Conflicts, crises, problems:

Other Comments:

Date: Name:

1. Reminder: every class agenda includes attendance, announcements, lesson review, break.
2. Goals:

3. Review topics:

4. Skill areas:

Grammar activities: Length of each activity: Brief description: Materials:
Speaking activities: Length of each activity: Brief description: Materials:
Listening activities: Length of each activity: Brief description: Materials:
Reading activities: Length of each activity: Brief description: Materials:
Writing activities: Length of each activity: Brief description: Materials:
Pronunciation activities: Length of each activity: Brief description: Materials:
Vocabulary activities: Length of each activity: Brief description: Materials:

Lesson Plan Report

Learner levels:

Number of students present:

New vocabulary:

Discussion themes:

Notes about students:

General Assessment of Lesson Plan

Worked:

Why?

Didn't work:

Why?

Self-evaluation:

Monthly Report

Tutor's name: Missy

Learner's name: Jennifer

Dates of Tutoring Sessions:
2/5
2/11
2/18

Topics Covered:
Math - measurement, Metric system, Graphs, Statistics, probability, Numeration (powers + roots, scientific notation, using formulas, order of operations)

Future Plans:
Jennifer has just entered G.E.D. classes @ West End Community Center + took placement tests last week. I'm meeting with her this week to decide what my role would be from now on. We would like to keep meeting so I can

Other Comments: give her individual help on her homework for class.

Date: 3/16/93 Name: KEITH

1. Reminder: every class agenda includes attendance, announcements, lesson review, break.
2. Goals: TALK ABOUT BANKING

3. Review topics:

4. Skill areas:

Grammar activities: Length of each activity: Brief description: Materials:
Speaking activities: READING ALOUD FROM NEWSWEEK, DISCUSS ADS THEY Length of each activity: 15 MIN. LIKED. Brief description: Materials: NEWSWEEK.
Listening activities: DICTATION Length of each activity: 5 MIN Brief description: DICTATE DEPOSITS/WITHDRAWALS, HAD STUDENTS BALANCE Materials: PEN/PAPER
Reading activities: NEWSWEEK Length of each activity: Brief description: Materials:
Writing activities: Length of each activity: Brief description: Materials:
Pronunciation activities: Length of each activity: CORRECTED DURING ACTIVITIES Brief description: Materials:
Vocabulary activities: TALKED ABOUT HAVING A PARTY NEXT TUESDAY Length of each activity: Brief description: ALSO PLAYED A GAME WHERE STUDENTS THOUGHT Materials: OF VOCABULARY TO USE LETTERS IN "GHENGHIS KAHN" SO WE COULD KILL HIM.

Learner levels: ADVANCED/INTERMEDIATE

Number of students present: 8

New vocabulary:

INTEREST, PERCENT, DEPOSIT, WITHDRAWAL, CHECKING, SAVINGS, ATM, BALANCE, ANNUAL, DEBT, SAFE

Discussion themes: BANKS, BANKING

Notes about students: It's hard to keep the younger students interested, esp. with this subject topic

General Assessment of Lesson Plan

Worked: Yes.

Why? It was fun, but they don't need checking accts b/c they say they never have enough $ to make it worth while

Didn't work:

Why?

Self-evaluation: Next time I am going to make a NO-SPANISH rule at the beginning of class. I wonder if I am going too slowly for some of the students.

Date: 2/16/93 Name: TINA & JEFF

1. Reminder: every class agenda includes attendance, announcements, lesson review, break.

2. Goals:
Read Short Story, vocabulary, comprehension, discussion

3. Review topics:
- personal history, country of origin, looked at globe

4. Skill areas:

Grammar activities: in connection w/ vocab list
Length of each activity: throughout class
Brief description: did some singular/plural diffs
Materials:

Speaking activities: discussion of story throughout
Length of each activity: turns asked questions about
Brief description: the story and also explained
Materials:

Listening activities: certain phrases, helped w/ pronunciation
Length of each activity:
Brief description:
Materials:

Reading activities: short story
~~Length~~ of each activity: 45 min
Brief description: Both learners took turns reading, both turns
Materials: would repeat, content of story discussed

Writing activities:
Length of each activity:
Brief description:
Materials:

Pronunciation activities: only trouble words like advise vs advise
Length of each activity: -ed words, etc.
Brief description:
Materials:

Vocabulary activities: learn vocab from short story
Length of each activity: 30min
Brief description: went over list, pronounced them, defined them
Materials:

Learner levels: beg-intermediate

Number of students present: 2

New vocabulary:

vocab from short story (In Canada , from transitions mag.)

problem	myself	different
values	changed	agree
ideas	right	wrong
agree	advise	advice
opinion	consideration	understand
repent	immigrated	sensitive

Discussion themes:

immigrating to another country, value differences
Intro- name, personal info, background
vocabulary, examples of new vocab in diff context

Notes about students:

only 2 students Jose & Lupe.
Jose was really intrigued & eager to learn, Lupe was a bit unsure at first but gained confidence quickly

General Assessment of Lesson Plan

Worked: going over vocab prior to reading story
Why? learners felt more comfortable, confident, helped ease comprehension of story (& general pronunciation)

Didn't work: Time Constraint
Why? didnt have time to discuss beyond first comprehension of story, spent a lot of time on vocab & reading story itself, but it really helped.

Self-evaluation:

Both Lupe & Jose commented that such a small class of 2 tutors was really helpful. I really enjoyed the lesson

ABE LITERACY APPROACHES

Learners' Experiences, Learners' Goals

Some native speakers of English have spent time in school, and may have had positive learning experiences cut short due to outside pressures. Others may have had less encouraging experiences with schooling, and may feel a certain anxiety about returning to a school-like situation. Some may feel embarrassed about their literacy skills; others might feel very good about joining a learning group. In any case, these are adults who have had extensive experience in the world. Many have developed numerous coping strategies for working around literacy-related tasks which they may not have been able to do for themselves.

Many ABE (Adult Basic Education) learners' want to complete the GED (General Equivalency Diploma) -- the high school diploma. For some, this is a long term goal, and their work in learning centers and/or classes is a process of preparation for taking the tests that lead to the GED. Others may want to improve reading and writing skills for their own purposes, or for work-related reasons.

Regardless of learners' individual goals, the approaches here advocate that tutors learn from the learners, and give constant feedback. Find out what they know, how they came to know it, what they want to know and learn, and keep them aware of how they are progressing.

The following was written by a native speaker of English, who was working on gaining reading and writing skills:

School Experience **by Tommy C.**

When I was in elementary school that was the time when a friend would read softly and I would read aloud to the class. Sometimes I would get the students to read paragraphs from today's lesson and I could memorize questions and answers and I could participate in class.

High school was very much similar but a little more advanced. But time had passed too, and I had passed with the time. I had passed up on reading yet I was more concerned about covering up than learning how to read. Now that I see reading is a necessity in life, I must learn how to read in order to progress in my life. For reading is a necessity in my life and I can't just let time pass by like I did in elementary school and high school with social promotion because in life there is no social promotion.

Tommy used many coping strategies in school to get by. Eventually he realized that he needed more independence as a reader. What other strategies do you think that people who can't read might use to avoid asking for help? Why would people not want others to know that they have trouble reading or writing?

Relating Basic Life Skills To Print Knowledge

A large part of the process is making learners consciously aware of what it is they're doing and how they're doing it. Talking about how a learner reads, for example, where she gets stuck, how she puts together meaning from words in print, is part of helping her learn about how she learns. Talking with learners as they deal with the GED's multiple choice tests and logic exercises helps learners to learn about how they actually do put information together and learn new things.

Although specific activities and materials will differ with each learner (ABE or GED), the underlying assumption is that learners can already do many things. Tutors help learners bridge the gap between what they already know and what they want to learn.

Knowing and Learning:
Integrating Life Experience With Schooling

ABE learners may or may not expect to go on to GED instruction at some point. In general ABE courses, learners often need assistance with reading and writing assignments. They may want to brush up on certain skills, or learn new ones, in preparation for a return to the workplace. They may want to learn to use a computer, write a business letter, or 'just learn something'. Whatever their goals, learners need to be aware of their own existing abilities so that they can consciously build on them. They often take for granted the literacy tasks they <u>can</u> do; these abilities need to be brought to their attention. Encouragement to go further and take new steps is only half the struggle.

Writing

Writing is a school-related task that seems to many to be completely unrelated to what we do in 'real life'. Many of us are afraid of, or uncomfortable with writing, and our learners often have these feelings, too. One way of helping them overcome those barriers is to encourage them to write frequently. We learn to write by writing, and there are many forms and purposes for writing.

Freewriting

Freewriting is one way to begin the needed loosening up process so that learners can just get started and can get something down on paper. People often do freewriting before or after a discussion about a topic of interest. The process is simple: when it's time to write, a time limit is set (5 minutes is a good amount of time to start) and everyone writes (tutors and learners together) -- without stopping -- about the topic at hand.

Because there's no stopping, no going back over the writing, no time to correct or re-word the writing, learner's expectations are already different from those they'd have if they were writing an essay to be turned in or graded. The tutor tells the learners that they won't have to share their writing if they don't want to. What's important here is the process of getting started -- of putting pen or pencil to paper, forming thoughts and writing down words.

Over time, learners may use freewriting as a means to work out ideas about concerns in their own lives, or to rough out initial ideas for academic essays. They might freewrite to warm up for other writing tasks so that the task of writing itself becomes less mysterious and less frightening. They come to learn to talk through writing (a process which is at the heart of much academic writing). They also learn to communicate their own feelings and opinions through writing as well. Freewriting is an important vehicle in bridging gaps between life experience and school-based learning.

Freewriting extends not only into academic essay writing, but can also branch out into more personal writing to the tutor in the dialogue journal. Dialogue journals are described at length in Techniques and Activities, and some aspects of dialogue journal writing are mentioned below, specifically within the context of adult basic education.

Dialogue Journals

Dialogue Journals work from learners' existing strengths and knowledge. Dialogue journal writing provides a means for student-tutor written interaction and communication in a non-threatening, individualized manner. Learners write to their teacher or tutor, working from their own level of ability. The journal is a place in which anything can be discussed; the focus is on content, not on correct form.

Getting Started

Learners are invited to write to their tutor in the dialogue journal. The learner can choose the topic(s) and determines the length of the writing. The tutor responds to the writing by asking questions, reflecting upon content, contributing his or her own information or offering sympathy, congratulations, etc.

Errors and Corrections

Explicit corrections are *not* made in the journal, but may be modeled in the tutor's responses. For example, in response to misspelled words, or incorrect grammar usage ("Yestidday I had went down-town"), the tutor models correct usage in the response ("When you went downtown yesterday, what did you do?"), and maintains the learner's interest in the content of the writing. Some errors take time to change -- with or without explicit correction; the point of this exercise is to encourage learners to write and read for meaning and for communication.

Some learners explicitly ask for corrections. A few ways of correcting journal entries without inhibiting free communication include:
- modeling correct usage in tutor's response
- underlining problem areas and asking learners to consider what the problems might be (verb tense, agreement, spelling, etc.)
- using one side of the page or notebook only for writing and using the facing side/page for corrections
- taking note of learners' problem areas and addressing those separately

In working out ways to individualize students' work, reading and writing problems that surface in the journal may facilitate organization of appropriate activities for individual, pair or small group work. In ABE classes, the journal provides not only an ongoing measure of the progression of learners' writing skills, but also encourages feedback about the course and the learners' work with the tutor, and with the learning experience overall.

Knowing and Learning for Academic Work: Naming What You Do
Preparation for academic work raises to a conscious level the kinds of thinking processes we go through in order to solve various kinds of word problems and academic exercises. A good deal of book-based, academic work requires readers to separate fact, opinion and generalization. For many of us, this is an ongoing, unconscious process. We constantly make judgements about what's fact, what's fiction, what's opinion, what's a stereotype, etc. Our learners make those distinctions, too, in the course of their daily lives. What's different in an academic setting is that learners are being asked to make those judgements on the basis of information they receive in writing. For many learners, a first step is in asking: What does the text say? What do you know from what you've read?

Word Problems and Other Tasks
Our task as tutors is helping learners talk through the steps they take in order to solve word problems, answer comprehension questions, and make decisions about multiple-choice test items. Look at the logic exercise below, and try to work it out.

Pedro, Denise, Ray, Susan and Fred each have a favorite color. They each like a different color; no two like the same one. Who likes which color?

1. Pedro's favorite color is not green.
2. Denise doesn't like red or orange.
3. Someone really likes red.
4. Susan's favorite color is yellow.
5. Ray hates blue.
6. Ray and Susan's favorite colors mix to make Fred's favorite.

This kind of exercise in logic and elimination utilizes particular thinking skills that many people may have, but are unaware of using. Using what you know to figure out what you don't know, you solve the problem.

Were you able to complete the exercise?* How did you do it? How might other people do it? It is not important that people approach the problem in the same way. However, for learners who find this kind of problem difficult, it is very important that they learn to discuss and understand the steps they take to solve the problem. In other words, the steps involved in solving the problem need to be talked about aloud (a sort of 'think-aloud protocol') in order to help make it clearer to learners for whom it is difficult.

Critical Thinking: From Common Sense to Verbal Logic
Critical thinking refers to the larger process of separating what can be true from what can't be true, and then stepping back a bit further and seeing how academic problems relate to real life problems, and how real life problems occur in larger social contexts.

The *hierarchy of thinking skills* below summarizes the thinking processes used in most problem solving activity. Knowing these skills well will help you support your learners as they gain awareness of their own thought process.

Hierarchy of thinking skills (adapted from GED texts)

evaluation.....does it all make sense?

synthesis.....pulling together different information

analysis.....separating information by its meaning

application.....using information in new contexts

comprehension.....taking meaning from information

memory.....recalling information

Starting at the bottom, the six skills represent *thinking processes* used in solving a problem (such as fixing a leaking faucet, figuring out a pay check, filling out a form)

If, for example, the problem is what to do to report a burglary to the police, there are two processes. One, actually calling the police and two, knowing what to tell the police once they arrive. Both processes require the use of these skills:

---

* *(Pedro: blue; Denise: green; Ray: red; Susan: yellow; Fred: orange.)*

Memory, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation.
Now, to work toward solving the problem of reporting a burglary:

The first skill used is *memory*. It has to do with what you know or remember about a situation. You know that things were stolen, you try to remember what you had, and you know that to report the crime, you need to call the police.

Your *comprehension* of the problem, (understanding that you have to call the police if you ever hope to retrieve your things) allows you to complete the first two steps.

Next, you *apply* the information you have (what was stolen, when it was stolen, how you dial 911) and use that information to continue to get help.

Your *analysis* of what the information means (well, they might help and they might not, but if I don't call, I know they won't help) enables you to *synthesize* all this information together.

Finally, your *evaluation* tells you if it all make sense or not. (Well, they came after 90 minutes, they might find my things or they might not, but now I feel I've done what I can. Maybe I'll look around the neighborhood and see if the thief dropped anything).

Of course, word problems, and book-based tasks follow these steps a little differently, but the underlying idea is the same. You start with what you know, you try to build your understanding until you've figured out a solution -- to a life problem, or a comprehension exercise.

Putting It Together:
Problem Posing and Critical Thinking Skills In Action
A problem-posing approach places this whole process of understanding into an even broader context, and asks why did someone rip me off anyway? Who needed my TV? Why did they come to my house? What can I do to change this situation? The problem-posing approach is discussed in greater detail in the section on Models of Education. It remains an option that you and your learners may wish to pursue actively. Generally, most learning situations present multiple opportunities to engage in asking why, and to integrate life and school.

Forming Literacy/Critical Thinking Patterns
Problem posing is often useful when learners confront 'need to know' materials. These materials are written documents, letters, insurance forms, accident reports, government letters, that learners encounter. Before trying to explain anything to the learners, it's important to ask what knowledge and understanding the learners bring to the material already. What do they understand about the writing, and what do they want to know more about? How does a letter announcing an insurance company's raising its rates impact upon a particular learner? What are the larger

issues behind the rising costs of insurance for everyone? Do learners want to talk about these issues?

When they are interested in exploring such problems, problem posing provides a useful guide for facilitating those discussions. At other times, however, learners may prefer to get the important facts from a written document and may not wish to discuss those issues any further. Facilitators and tutors might try to raise learners' awareness of the larger issues surrounding such problems as paying for insurance, but if learners choose not to pursue the discussion, their rights and needs must be respected.

Real life materials often provide a way into worksheets and other academic-based literacy materials, and vice versa. As you come to know your learners and their needs you'll start to balance the work you do with them around both academic and real life texts and materials.

The section on ***TECHNIQUES AND ACTIVITIES*** provides concrete ways to integrate literacy skills within particular topics, and the ***CHOOSING MATERIALS*** section suggests books and visual materials that may be useful.

During your tutoring sessions, you will find your own ways of helping learners tie their learning together: using critical thinking skills to talk through and solve problems; developing literacy through meaningful content; and integrating specific skills (spelling, writing letters, reading aloud) to meet learners' needs and goals.

ESL LITERACY APPROACHES

ESL Learners and Their Needs: A Basic Profile
The following was written by a non-native speaker of English, who was working on gaining reading, writing, and communication skills:

My name is Gudom Thagnabouth. I am from Laos. I was born at Savannakhet Provence, on October 12, 1942. Before in 1975 I was a soldier my last rank is MAJOR. After 1975 my country tooke cover by Communist Govement. I had captured and then their send my to the consentration camp at north Laos. Everybody call Vieng xay Camp. Over there I was worked hard every day. Until 12 years ago. In 1987 I had released. Their send my to the Vientiane City. I stay there for one month only. Then I was escaped to the THAILAND. I stay in the refugee camp at Thailand for 4 months. Then their send my to the BATAAN Provence in PHILIPPINES refugee camp. Everybody call P.R.P.C. for study English second language for 6 months. NOW I live in Providence, RHODE ISLAND.

Thangnabouth, Gudom from Laos: Smith Hill Community Center

Gudom uses many coping strategies in his new country to get by. He realized before coming that he would need English language and literacy skills to survive here. What other strategies do you think immigrants and refugees might use to survive here? What feelings do you think they bring with them when they come to a classroom to learn? What might English represent to them?

What are some questions you'd like to pursue? What information would you like about refugees and immigrants?

How do you think literacy learning differs for native speakers of English from people whose first language isn't English?

Some ESL/literacy learners speak English fairly well, but need help with literacy skills. Others have less fluency in English, and need to develop all four language skills -- listening, speaking, reading and writing -- together.

- Listening and reading are *receptive* skills. You listen to someone else speak, you read something that has already been written.

- Speaking and writing are *productive* skills; they involve creating new language. Many learners develop their receptive skills more quickly than their productive skills. Developing productive skills can be much more time-consuming and intimidating.

Two Approaches

Total physical response (TPR) is an approach to language learning which allows learners to listen and respond to instructions before they produce spoken or written language, which helps develop receptive skills. (For more on TPR, see ***TECHNIQUES AND ACTIVITIES***). Approaches such as the Language Experience Approach (LEA) combine all four skills. As you continue tutoring, you'll see that LEA forms the basis of a great deal of learner-centered literacy activity.

Language Experience Approach (LEA) is a basic means for generating language in oral and written forms. People adapt and use the approach in many ways.

What It Is

Essentially, LEA consists of listening to learners' spoken language, writing it down (transcribing it into written form), and using it as reading and teaching material.

The rationale is that learning to read has to do with connecting one's own knowledge of the world (i.e. experience) with print. Practiced readers use reading strategies such as *inferring* and *predicting* meaning based on their own experiences (see ***READING AND WRITING***). Using reading material that comes from learners' experiences and their existing knowledge of spoken language helps develop these reading skills.

The content of language experience stories is already meaningful to learners. Meaningful content and context is not only more interesting to learners, it is easier to retain.

To illustrate, read this fragment and try to recollect it without looking back: *Pat put paper, peppers, potatoes and pots in planters to protect them.* Now read this: *Yesterday I went downtown to buy shoes.* The example is exaggerated intentionally -- an emphasis only on phonics has little to do with meaningful content; a sentence describing a real event using high frequency words common and known to learners contains meaning and authentic vocabulary. Such a sentence forms a basis for generating writing that learners can and will want to read.

Work on phonics (sound and symbol correspondences) and grammar forms is embedded in the content of the language generated by learners. Teachers can focus on specific forms as they arise in the activity.

In its purest form, LEA is an exact encoding of learners' words. The learner tells his/her story, and the tutor (or other learners) writes that story exactly as s/he hears it. With beginners, one may need to offer suggestions for connecting words in order to form a coherent story. After the story has been written, learners then use it as the basis for their reading material for that particular session.

How To Use It

LEA can be used with an individual learner in one-to-one tutoring, at a blackboard, or on a pad of paper in a group learning situation.

More than one learner can construct the story. One learner might begin to talk about something she remembers about her day, for example. Others might then contribute their recollections until a paragraph (or several paragraphs, with more advanced learners) has been written. The tutor then invites learners to read the paragraph (and might invite them to read every two or three sentences as the story is being written).

With very beginning learners the story might be just three or four short sentences, often with several mistakes. To start, tutors often need to ask a series of open-ended questions. For example: *Today I go work factory. Factory name Noel Stevens. Near El Inca restaurant. I operate machine press.* Once this story has been encoded (written down), learners read it through several times, together and individually.

Although it may seem that hearing ten other people read the same passage would be tedious, learners remain engaged in the process -- watching, learning from and listening to others (and learning the pronunciation and rhythm of English); preparing themselves for the trip to the newsprint or blackboard to read. The tutor has a chance to observe who helps whom, who 'memorizes' a passage by perhaps reading one word while pointing to another, who wants to read first, and who needs encouragement from peers.

Building Literacy Activity From LEA

Once the story has been read, beginning level learners might spend a good amount of time copying it into their notebooks. The tutor might invite learners whose abilities to produce language (by speaking or writing) lag behind their abilities to understand it (through listening or reading) to go to the text and circle the word 'work' or all the words that begin with a particular letter.

For the next session the story can be typed and distributed to learners for review. Questions might be added; comprehension questions (Is the factory near the restaurant?) may be useful for learners who want visible evidence of pencil and paper interaction, for whom learning occurs very gradually. Other open ended questions (Do you work in a factory? Do you like your work?) may generate yet another round of language experience writing.

But They Don't Speak English...
Beginning learners might start with photos or other visual images which they label and learn. These can be used initially for labeling purposes; later sentences and stories may be built from the photos or visuals.

LEA can also be used to encourage learners to write by inviting them to each contribute one sentence to a general topic, such as: *Last weekend I . . .* Learners will each write one sentence about their weekend. Once learners have seen the process modeled a few times -- the tutor listens, asks clarification questions, suggests words when needed and then encodes them -- learners take over the work of scribing with and for each other.

Error Correction
It is important to remember that people learning a language will make mistakes as they learn. Learning a language is intimidating for many. Most people learn English through testing their ideas about how this new language works. People will need to be aware of their mistakes, but not all of them at once. We tend to learn correct form best by learning to spot our own mistakes. Tutors should encourage learners to look for mistakes, but refrain from pointing out more than one or two at a time unless asked.

Some tutors correct learners as tutors transcribe for them. ("Last week I go", becomes a question from the tutor: "You went?"). Others leave learners to transcribe for each other or transcribe the exact utterances, because these are the words learners know and use. As learners continue to gain facility with language they will correct each other.

It is important to remember that LEA is a bridge between learners' initial uses of oral and written language and the wider world of print that exists beyond the classroom. LEA all by itself is a starting point. It is unfair to send learners out into the world with only a private language (full of misspellings, or irregular grammar usage). LEA is a piece of the process of moving from learners' spoken language to standard English usage.

Relating Basic Life Skills to Print Knowledge

Many of the topics, and much of the literacy activity you undertake with ESL learners starts from LEA. Survival ('life skills') topics, such as learning to write a money order or reading a telephone bill, can begin with simple group stories from learners. Look at the example below:

Juan has a telephone.
Pedro has a telephone.
Maria has a telephone.
Sok has a telephone, too.
Juan's telephone bill was very big.
Juan wants to call the telephone company.

Notice the repetition of the word *telephone*. This story came from a small group of learners, each one writing his or her own name, or the name of a classmate.

Juan had a problem with his phone bill, and brought it to class. He gave the tutor permission to discuss the problem with the other learners. First, the tutor elicited this LEA. She worked with *telephone* as a high-frequency sight word, (a word that is seen often, and is a very commonly used word).

Later, she photocopied the bill (again, with Juan's permission), and the group worked on reading the bill, figuring out the due date, the charges, and trying to guess why the bill was so unreasonably high. Learners also brainstormed suggestions for Juan -- he should go to the phone company and complain about the bill; he should write a letter; he should ask an English-speaking friend to call for him. This kind of activity is a typical, real life application of the problem-posing approach.

Using English

Learners use written language in a context -- to understand instructions, to pay bills, to deal with their children's school. Reading and writing are only half the skills needed to use English.

Communicative competence refers to a speaker's ability to know how and when to use the language. This ability applies to reading and writing as well as to listening and speaking.

Communicative competence is an ability which develops over time. Just as a native speaker of English knows that there is one way to speak to a family member, another way to address an employer, and yet another way to speak to a telephone salesperson, ESL learners also have a sense of ways to address people within their native language and culture. They may not know, however, how to use English to meet different needs. They may not understand that a note to a teacher should probably not be written on the back of an envelope, or that a utility bill can be challenged.

Working with learners to ensure that they achieve communicative competence is an overall goal. Specific objectives within that goal include helping learners develop language to meet their individual needs.

Survival Topics
Learners identify their survival needs through the topics they discuss. It is the tutor's responsibility to help generate meaningful discussion and listen carefully for topics of importance to learners.

For example, in the telephone story above, we learn that Juan has a problem with his phone bill and needs help. Other learners know about problems with bills, and offer him solutions. They don't need a whole unit on paying bills -- they already know how to do this.

Before embarking upon any survival skills unit (such as transportation, health, housing, banking, etc.), it's very important to find out what learners already know about the topic and what they want to learn. Some may be homeowners who don't need to learn how to go about renting an apartment, but they might want help with tax forms. Others might might want to learn about how to buy a house for the first time. The more that tutors can tap learners' knowledge -- to help each other, to build discussion and writing -- the more meaningful and useful the language and literacy activity in the classroom will be.

Grammar
A traditional approach to ESL instruction is the *grammar/translation* method, which resembles the methods used to teach many of us French, Spanish or other foreign languages in high school. Our teachers used English as the language of instruction, and had us learn to conjugate verbs, learn vocabulary and grammar in the target language (the language we were learning).

This approach is not particularly effective for ESL learners because ESL uses English (the target language) as the language of instruction for non-English speakers. The problem is that learners cannot understand the information taught because they do not yet understand the language used for instruction. Grammar/translation talks *about* the target language but doesn't focus on real or immediate use of the language. Immigrants and refugees need to use English immediately, and therefore to focus on their communicative skills.

Advanced level learners might ask structural questions about English grammar and usage. However, for the most part, a learner-centered approach which begins with the learners' words (LEA) is more useful. For learners with a strong interest in grammar, solid exercises can be developed from the LEA writings without sacrificing meaning for form.

More Grammar, More Context

We can also use Juan's story to build some grammar exercises. Using the form (*name*) has (*object*), [Juan has a telephone] we can build other sentences using the third person singular (he/she/it) form of the verb to have, and can also reinforce the other forms:

I have	we have
you have	you have
he, she, it has	they have

Allowing this exercise to develop from the structures that learners already know strengthens their ability to absorb new learning about the verb.

This approach is very effective for helping people learn and remember new grammar information. People are able to learn the new information because it comes in a context that is already familiar and meaningful. To simply present the form of the verb *to have* in the present tense and conjugate it, without a context (such as who *has* a telephone), makes it more difficult to remember, and far less interesting to learners. It is essential in ESL work always to build meaningful context.

Language Development: Some Principles and Conditions*

language develops through use	Learners develop language skills by <u>using</u> the language. Learners need opportunities to use language; they need people with whom to speak and listen, plus situations that promote active participation. Learners are motivated to communicate. Learning activities should promote participation, and should be social. Tutors need to be sensitive to learners' initial fears of making mistakes, and should not confuse a learner's initial period of silence in the classroom with that learner's lack of having anything to say.
function meaning interaction	Language practice should be functional and meaningful. Classroom activities should provide learners with something real to say and a reason to say it. Authentic language materials, and interaction with native speakers of English provide the most beneficial practice. Classroom organization must allow for interaction with other learners and with proficient and/or native speakers of English.
focus on meaning	Language learning is improved when its focus is on doing things with the language rather than on the structure of the language itself. Speaking the language rather than speaking about the language helps people who are beginning to grapple with <u>meaning</u> and communicating in that language.

comprehensible language

Language input must be understandable to the learner. Language meaning should be evident from the context in which it is used. This means using simple, direct communication, examples, and visuals. Learners' background knowledge should be used; language about something the learner already knows (and has a schema for) is more comprehensible than language about unknown things.

errors

Making mistakes is a normal, constructive part of language learning. The fact that a particular structure or word has been taught and learned does not necessarily mean that it can be consistently used correctly. It takes months and often years for learners to integrate and truly know many aspects of language and language use. Tutors should be sensitive to learners' needs. Some learners actively seek correction, others may be discouraged or ashamed if corrected regularly. Allowing learners to complete what they're saying, asking for clarification, and modeling correct responses develops their willingness and ability to use language to communicate.

learning environment

Language is learned best in an atmosphere of trust, acceptance, high expectations and support. In such an atmosphere, learners are willing to take risks learning and try out language form, both of which are necessary for language development. Fear, anxiety and competitiveness make learning difficult. Dealing with these feelings prevents learners from attending to the language instruction they receive.

multisensory language skills

Listening, speaking, reading and writing strengthen and build on each other. The four language skills should not be taught separately, in isolation from one another. The four language skills should be integrated in language learning. Increased ability in one skill leads to increased ability in other skills. For example, developing speaking and writing skills do more to help reading comprehension than reading skill exercises alone.

language and culture

Language develops in a cultural context; both the culture of the learners' first language and that of the language being learned influence the progress of language development. Factors such as the functions of oral and written language in the learners' culture and culturally familiar situations must be considered; they will influence development of the language being learned. The culture of the target language (English) must be learned along with the language because it determines the meaning given to language in varying situations.

language interdependence	Skills in the native language support development of a second language. The more a learner understands about the workings of one language, the easier it is for him/her to grasp the workings of another. However, proficiency in the first language is only one of many factors determining the ease with which a learner will acquire another language.
linguistic, sociolinguistic and strategic competence	Language proficiency includes linguistic (or grammatical) competence, socio-linguistic competence, and strategic competence. Grammatical accuracy (knowing what to say) is the result of both the process of language acquisition and direct and indirect teaching of grammatical forms. Learners need to know which grammatical forms to use, with whom, and under what circumstances; this socio-linguistic knowledge is needed for learners to know how, when and where to say what they want to say. Learners also need to be competent in the use of strategies which allow them to compensate for their problems with language or for breakdowns in communication.
communicative and school skills	Language proficiency pre-supposes different abilities for different people in different situations. Using English to learn content matter is very different from the ability to use English for ordinary conversation; the ability to converse fluently and correctly in English does not mean that the learner can learn academic content in an all-English setting. Curriculum organization must take into account the learner's basic goals: every day conversational skills, the development of academic content, or reading and writing for day to day purposes, for example.
time factors and evaluation	Language development takes time. Assessment of language development cannot be made on the basis of a single test or tests. Language development is a process. It occurs over time and therefore must be assessed and measured constantly and over time. Ongoing evaluations should contain multiple measures of proficiency, including tutor's observations, learning logs, writing samples, and notes on interaction in class.

**Source Unknown*

EVALUATION

Traditional Evaluation

Many of us who have attended formalized school have experienced evaluation in various forms. Quizzes and tests are typical ways students' knowledge and progress are evaluated in the traditional classroom. Other types of "standardized tests" include those required to enter institutions of higher education such as the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) examinations for college or the GRE (Graduate Record Examination) tests for graduate school.

Standardized testing may be a good way to measure knowledge gained through academic or classroom instruction, but it is not particularly effective for measuring knowledge or skills learned through years of life experience. Using standardized tests to measure learners' progress in classes that are learner-centered and participatory does not make much sense since only the learners and volunteers or teachers can say what has been studied, how it has been studied, and what ways seem most appropriate to evaluate progress. Traditional quizzes or tests are helpful, but they are only <u>one</u> form of assessment that can indicate learners' progress.

Alternative Assessment

Evaluation is an extremely important part of teaching and learning. Without evaluation, it is impossible to know where to begin teaching a person to read (Can she read the newspaper, a bus schedule, street signs?; Can she read at all?). It is also impossible to note improvements in the learning process, and thus understand which areas of language learning need to be focused on next.

First Steps: In-Take

An initial *in-take* form provides a starting point for the volunteer and learner in their language instruction. For example, on the first day of class, learners' might be given two tasks to complete that can be used to assess their language levels: an information sheet that asks for some personal data including how much experience a person has had with formal schooling and what specific needs they have for coming to class and learning, and a writing sample (following are some examples of initial in-take or information sheets). From this *in-take* procedure, a volunteer or teacher begins to get an idea of how much exposure the learner has had to formalized schooling, what some of her reasons are for attending class, and how comfortable the learner is with writing. Once the learner has completed the in-take forms, the volunteer or teacher can talk over some of what is on the information sheet and in the writing sample with the learner.

Protfolios: Why Do It?

Keeping a portfolio of learners' work over the course of the semester provides a basis for comparing which areas show progress and which reveal a need for more work. For example, collecting writing samples regularly throughout the course and comparing them will reveal whether the learner is progressing, which areas are improving, and which areas need to be worked on. Ideally, periodic meetings

between tutor or teacher and learner should be set up so that all the material in the portfolio can be reviewed, progress pointed out, and plans for next steps in the educational process can be discussed and planned.

Portfolios also allow other volunteer tutors or teachers who may be working with the same learners to see what work has been accomplished, what areas need work, and which directions must be focused on next.

Who Keeps It?
The ideal situation is to have an area in the classroom where all the portfolios are kept, so that they are accessible to tutors or teachers and learners at all times. If this is not possible, some other options are:

•Duplicate folders can be kept by teacher and learner (this means a lot of photocopying)
•Teacher and learners can decide which items should be kept in the portfolio; teacher keeps the portfolio and brings it to each class
•Teacher and learners can decide which items should be kept in the portfolio; learner keeps the portfolio and brings it to each class

Below are some examples of items typically found in the portfolio (samples follow):

•Learner information sheet: this is usually used in the in-take process; personal information such as name, address, phone, educational experience or background are usually found on this form; often includes questions about why the learner has come to the class, or what the learner's goals are for coming to class; this is also helpful for getting a general idea about the learner's level of comfort with reading, writing bits of information, and using forms.

•Writing sample: this is often taken during the in-take process; it is used as an initial assessment of the learner's level of comfort or skill in writing.

•Learner goal sheet: goal sheets are helpful for directing the teacher and learner in terms of areas of progress and areas of need; this directly involves the learner in constructing their educational plan; allows the learner and teacher to evaluate and develop goals that are realistic -- both short and long term.

•Lesson plans: lesson plans are used to keep a record of what happens in the class over time; they help to build a consistent curriculum; lesson plans keep track of materials and approaches used, what has worked and what has not; for more information and for samples, please see the section on ***LESSON PLANS***.

•Worksheets: worksheets include such things as photocopies from books, real materials like job applications, readings with comprehension questions, games like cross-word puzzles, or grammar exercises that are completed in class or at home and turned in; worksheets involve more traditional tasks used in conjuction with learner-centered activities.

•Quizzes or tests: while quizzes and tests are more traditional, they have a place in the learner-centered classroom as well; often learners will request this type of activity because they may find it helpful in terms of gauging their own progress, or they may feel quizzes or tests are an important part of what they perceive as classroom learning; teachers or tutors need to find out first from learners if quizzes or tests are appropriate or desired.

•Special projects: these can include any number of things ranging from a special piece of writing such as an essay, to a family tree, a collection of vocabulary items, a game the learner made, or an autobiography; with special projects, often it is more appropriate for the learner to decide if it belongs in the portfolio.

For more on learner assessment, see Bringing Literacy to Life by Heide Spruck Wrigley and Gloria J. A. Guth (1992). Aguirre International.

EXAMPLE INFORMATION SHEET

Name_____Phone_____age_____

Address_____

_____

If you live near a bus line, please write bus directions to your house from Kennedy Plaza:

_____

_____

_____

High Schools attended:_____Last grade completed_____

Why did you leave school? _____

_____

_____

What subject do you like the best? _____

What subject do you find most difficult?_____

What subject are you interested in starting with?_____

Have you been involved with any other GED programs ? If yes, which programs ?

_____

_____

Would you prefer to meet with a tutor in your home? Is there another place that would be better? Please specify.

_____

What times are you available?

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
AM							
PM							

I request a student tutor to help me prepare for a General Equivalency Diploma (GED).

_____ _____

client date

_____

referring agency--contact

EXAMPLE INFORMATION SHEET

Summer 1993

Date_____

Name_____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

What country are you from?_____

Did you go to school in your country? yes no

How many years? _____

What languages do you speak?_____

What languages do you read and write? _____

When did you come to the United States? _____

When or where do you need to use English?_____

_____

EXAMPLE GOAL SHEET

PLEASE COMPLETE EACH WEEK

Name_____ Date_____

1. This week I learned these new words:_____

_____

_____

2. I don't understand_____

_____

_____

3. I want to learn_____

_____

_____

4. In class this week I liked_____

_____

_____

5. In class this week I didn't like_____

_____

_____

EXAMPLE GOAL SHEET

WHAT DO YOU KNOW? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

Name_____

	Already Know	Want to Learn
read name and address	___	___
read telephone numbers	___	___
read signs	___	___
read labels (medicine, food)	___	___
read directions, instructions	___	___
read calendar	___	___
read bus, train schedules	___	___
information about health	___	___
menus	___	___
magazines	___	___
newspapers	___	___
bills	___	___
books	___	___
recipes	___	___
letters	___	___
notices from school	___	___
job applications	___	___
job announcements	___	___

other_____

I need English to:

_____shop for food
_____shop for clothing
_____talk to my child's teacher
_____talk to my landlord
_____talk to my boss
_____get a job
_____talk to my doctor
_____talk on the phone
_____get a driver's license
_____become a U.S. citizen

other_____

EXAMPLE GOAL SHEET

Circle the one that is true for you:

I think reading is:	fun	OK	not fun
I think reading is:	easy	kind of easy	hard
I think writing is:	fun	OK	not fun
I think writing is:	easy	kind of easy	hard

What do you want to improve?:

speaking_____	listening_____
reading_____	writing_____
pronunciation_____	vocabulary_____
grammar_____	

What do you like to do most in class?:

writing_____	reading_____
practice speaking_____	play games_____
worksheets_____	watch video/TV_____

EXAMPLE WORKSHEET

Name: _____

Date: _____

Write: 32 thirty-two

9 _____

13 _____

76 _____

twenty-nine 29

one hundred one _____

seventy-six _____

fifteen _____

What time is it?

1.

_____

2.

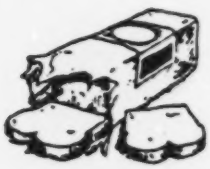
_____

3.

_____

What is this?

apple



_____

_____

_____

EXAMPLE WORKSHEET

Circle Yes or No

1. I am married Yes No
2. I am single. Yes No
3. I have children. Yes No
4. I live in Providence. Yes No
5. I work in Providence. Yes No
6. I live in an apartment. Yes No

Write your own story: (or draw a picture)

TECHNIQUES AND ACTIVITIES

The methods, approaches and activities that literacy tutors use are like tools that people keep in a toolbox. You will gain experience with these activities as you work with your learners. You will find yourself adapting and expanding many of the activities to meet the needs of your learners. You can incorporate these activities into literacy learning for native speakers of English as well as for ESL literacy learners. They are designed to be used within an ongoing learning sequence. You can use and combine activities as students' needs and interests dictate.

Many learners need to develop skills in different areas. Some may be stronger readers than writers, others may need help developing their understanding of English. These approaches and activities may help you to create different kinds of interaction to help learners with differing learning styles. They work well in multi-level literacy settings, and within the context of multiple topics. Brief descriptions are given for each heading, followed by examples. They are listed alphabetically on the following pages.

Techniques and Activities

Audio Tapes....67
Bingo....67
Cloze....68
Dialogue Journals....68
Dyads....70
Flashcards....71
Grids....71
Grids: Alphanumeric....71
Grids: Interview/Information....72
Hangman....73
Language Experience Approach....73
Operations....76
Pair Work....76
Photos....76
Picture Stories....77
Realia....78
Scrambling/Sequencing....79
Total Physical Response (TPR)....80
Visuals....81
Writers' Groups....81

AUDIO TAPES -- (dictation, listening practice, drills, tapes of guest speakers). Teacher, student-made or commercially prepared, tapes lend themselves to extended multi-level activity. Learners can listen for content, particular words or phrases. Popular songs work well as *cloze* (fill in the blanks) exercises. Learners can generate and tape dialogs and then transcribe them. Language experience stories can be read on tape and listened to by learners who then read the accompanying texts during independent working times.

***For example*:**
Leaving a message: record 5 - 10 different phone messages (e.g., This is Juan Alvarez, please ask Peter to call me. My number is 345-6789.). You can use 'while you were out' preprinted forms, develop your own forms, or ask learners to use a blank sheet of paper to record the messages in writing. As they advance, they may want to record their own messages.

Reading a text: you and/or your learner might read a simple text (one they've already written and/or read, or a new reading). The learner then transcribes the audio text into written form. Stories from *Expressions* or Personal Stories provide useful texts for reading and taping.

BINGO -- sets of bingo cards can be designed for specific topics, such as months, days, digital or analog clock times, occupations, colors, numbers (numerals/words), foods, items of clothing. Words and/or pictures can be used to create each card. Use bottle caps, beans, coins, buttons, etc. for markers. Aside from providing a change of pace, bingo cards and the process of playing bingo involve reading horizontally and vertically, scanning, matching sounds, symbols and images, and can reinforce certain forms of 'document' literacy (reading forms, grids, applications).

***For example*:**
Using cardboard or heavy paper, make 12 squares, 4 down and 3 across*. On each of the squares write or draw the words/items that are being studied (such as socks, shoes, belt, shirt, skirt, pants, dress). Make as many cards as you have learners, plus one for yourself. Part of the project might include showing learners how to make the cards, and having them each make one or two different cards. All of the cards should be different -- each card should have one 'free' square, and all of them should have at least one item not found on the others. Use index cards, or small pieces of paper to write all the words that might be found on the bingo cards. You or a learner can read the cards, (or show the pictures, if you use drawings). As each word/picture is read/shown, the corresponding square is covered on the bingo board. The first person to complete the board wins, and becomes the next person to call/show the cards. Two or three rounds of this is usually enough, but sometimes people like to play more. This can also be played with learners on their own, and can free your time to work with one learner or group of learners while others are engaged in playing bingo or making their own new boards and cards.

CLOZE – a fill in the blanks exercise. You can omit every ___th word, or pronouns, verbs, or other particular words/parts of speech upon which you want to focus. For very beginning level students, cloze is a good exercise for copying – visual discrimination (learning the difference between "p" and "b", for example), letter formation, etc. It's also good practice for working on high frequency (commonly used) words.

For example:
Copy a language experience story that learners have written, but omit certain words along the way. (e.g. *His ____ is Juan. ___ comes from the Dominican _____. He is 34 _____ old. He ___ married.*).

Learners who are just beginning to be able to read can copy, following word by word in order to complete the exercise. For other more advanced learners, you can focus on verbs, omitting every verb in a text, or all the words that begin with a certain letter.

DIALOGUE JOURNALS – tutors and learners communicate regularly on a one to one basis through writing in a small journal on whatever topics interest the learner. The process works from learners' existing strengths and knowledge. Weekly writing in the dialog journal encourages both individual and collaborative inter-action with reading and writing.

Rationale: Dialog journal writing provides a means for learner-tutor written interaction and communication in a non-threatening, individualized manner. Learners are invited to write to their teacher or tutor, working from their own level of ability.

Getting started: Beginning learners might be asked to write one or two sentences about how they're feeling on a particular day. More advanced students might be invited to write 3-5 sentences about their weekend, their job, their family, etc. The tutor then responds to the writing by either posing additional questions, reflecting upon content, contributing his/her own information or offering sympathy, congratulations.

Errors and corrections: Explicit corrections are *not* made within or on the learners' actual writing, but may be modeled in the tutors' responses. (For example, if a learner reports: *"Yester-day I have some time, go went downtown to shopping"*, a tutor may respond with, *"I'm glad you had time to go shopping. When you went shopping, did your children go with you?"*).

Seeing progress: Some errors will not change quickly with or without explicit correction. The point of this exercise is to encourage learners to write and read for meaning and for communication. The journal is not a place to focus on formally correct writing. As time passes, learners see their entries grow in length and often see improvements in their writing as well.

Building up to the journal: The writing process can be intimidating. In order to demystify writing to some extent, it may help to consider the following:
-- learners' uses of reading and writing on a daily basis
-- kinds of reading and writing tasks in which learners engage (time cards, shopping lists, letters to family or school, bills)
-- ways in which to work from the whole (a written communication) to its parts (ideas, words, sentences)

To begin to engage learners in the reading/writing interaction, consider:
-- using the blackboard or other regularly designated area to post a question, statement, or simple written communication every day, to which learners can respond orally, initially, and possibly later in writing. Examples include: space (on the blackboard) for the date, a weather report or other daily information to be written, current events posted.
-- having learners exchange simple written questions with each other at regular intervals (weekly, every two days).

Approaches to consider in beginning the journal process:
-- focus on a specific topic, such as family, work, housing situations;
-- free writing;
-- question and answer format.
Some people use the journal to increase communication between themselves and their learners, and focus on the meaning communicated in the writings. Others respond to learners' requests for correction. Some possible ways of correcting journal entries without inhibiting free communication include:
-- modeling correct usage in tutor's response;
-- underlining problem areas and asking learners to consider what the problems might be (verb tense, agreement, or spelling, etc.)
-- using one side of the page or notebook only for writing and using the facing side/page for corrections;
-- taking note of learners' problem areas and addressing those separately. In working out ways to individualize students' work, reading/writing problems that surface in the journal may facilitate organization of appropriate activities for individual, pair or small group work.

I know that you are very ami lately the teacher has been taking - and that you will work hard Idias from the student IN order to finding a job once you know develope a better systems to help the - English. I hope this class + student to learn easier and fasten- you with your English so + but also to limiting the students you find a job faster. wiles WANT to be a teacher'

I'm like this class. I'm a I'm glad that you see what I'm doing. this study. you very good and the kind of system I'm developing english language. you very g from students ideas. Do you think teacher. that I'm limiting students?

NO YOU DON'T

DYADS -- various interactive *pair activities*: information gaps, charts, grids, giving and receiving directions. The goal of dyads is to create a situation of interdependence. Learners need each other (and each other's information) to accomplish a task, fill in a form, solve a problem or otherwise complete a given activity. (See also Pair Work, Grids).

For example:
Two learners (or groups of learners) have the same map, but one person/group has locations of 4 places marked on the map, and the other has locations of 4 different places marked on their map; together they complete marking all 8 locations on a map. They can ask, "What's in the building on Brown street, next to the bank?" and other questions in order to elicit the needed information from the other person or group.

Reprinted with permission. Practice with your Partner, p. 13
Linmore Publishing, Box 1545, Palatine, Illinois, 60078 1(800)336-3656

Say these addresses.

1) 30 King St., Apt. 4
2) 400 Lincoln Ave.
3) 230 E. Kennedy Ave.
4) 3 W. Johnson Road
5) 3450 Greenwood St.
6) 22 W. 41st Ave.
7) 20 Hill Ave.,Apt. 3
8) 403 S. Lake St.
9) 2030 E. Oak Ave.
10) 241 1st Ave.

NOTES:

Prior to the activity, review common street names in your community. Usually a community has "Main Street", First, Second, Third, etc. Review the use of abbreviations - # for Apartment number, 7th for seventh, St. for Street, etc.

A sample interchange to practice when dictating the addresses is:

Student B: *For number 1. What address is it?*

Student A: *Ten Oak Street.* (Reads from the Information Card)

Student B: *Ten Oak Street.* (Writes the address.)

Special note: You may wish to review the letters of the alphabet before the activity if students will become involved in spelling the names of the streets.

FLASHCARDS -- key phrases, vocabulary words, or sentences can be written on cards or strips of paper and then are physically manipulated, arranged, seen, used, and read. Sentence strips can be cut up and put back together again. Learners can also use sentence strips and/or flashcards to create new phrases. Learners sometimes keep a file of flashcards for reference; they can see the number of words they've learned increase. Other learners prefer to keep lists of words, or to organize their writing in notebooks.

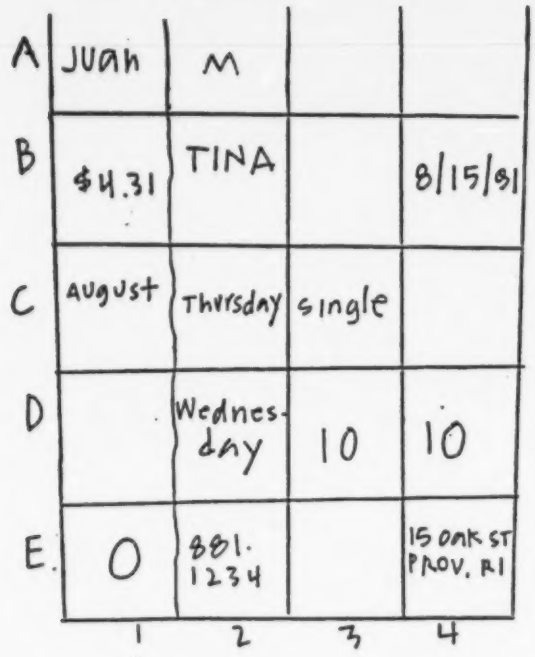
For example:
After reading a new story, learners might write words they want to learn, or that are new to them on flashcards. They can then 'quiz' each other -- having each other read and/or spell the new words. As learners become more advanced they might use the cards to learn alphabetization skills, or group the cards into different categories -- foods, articles of clothing, verbs, names of classmates, etc.
If there is a storage area for small group tutorials, students may want to create a group set of flashcards to be used at the learning center, in addition to flashcards they make and keep for their own use.

GRIDS -- a useful format for beginning readers. Essential information appears horizontally and/or vertically. Encourages various left/right, up/down scanning skills. Grids can be built around learners' dates of birth, number of children, addresses, zip codes, phone numbers, jobs, etc. Useful in providing information for comparison in a visual format that can be read easily -- without 'connecting' words, or long sentences (which *can* be built from information taken from a grid). (See also Interview/Information Grids, Alphanumeric Grids and Pair Work).

ALPHANUMERIC GRIDS -- learners use information generated previously through conversation, to complete alphanumeric grids. This is important beginning work for map reading (particularly local street guides) and for other kinds of document literacy, as it requires reading both across and up and down the page. (Document literacy refers to forms or charts that use horizontal and vertical formats).

For example:
Using the grid below, learners can practice reading and/or hearing instructions (given by the facilitator or by other learners, such as: Put the [name of this month] in G-11; write your last name in F-3.) As in bingo, the information asked for can relate to whatever context or content that learners are studying at a given time.

Name _____



INTERVIEW / INFORMATION GRIDS – students interview each other and insert given responses into appropriate places on the grid. Working from basic information questions they normally ask each other (e.g., Where do you come from? Are you married?), learners place the information under appropriate headings, as illustrated below. Building the grid and filling in the needed information allows learners at all levels to participate -- through writing, reading, and/or responding to requested information.

Name	How many children?	working?	Who is working?
Juanita	4	yes	
Carlos	0	yes	
Pedro	3	yes	Who isn't working?
Maria	2	no	
Juanita has four children. She is working.			Who has 4 children?
Carlos has no children. He is working.			Who has no children?
Pedro has three children. He is working.			Who has 3 children?
Maria has two children. She's not working.			

HANGMAN -- Hangman is good for the first or last five or ten minutes of a class or tutoring session to reinforce new words or even multi-word messages, or to use words learners know but perhaps haven't written that particular day. Predicting, counting letters, using vowels and consonants are all valuable subskills developed within the context of playing the game. These skills emerge after learners have played several times. There's no need to introduce vowels and consonants in isolation. As learners get the feel of the game, and understand that 'r' might not be an appropriate choice to complete 'n_xt', they begin to get a sense of how vowels and consonants work (if they haven't already through their own ongoing interaction with writing and reading). They're using previous learning; they are to predict the word 'next' because it is a word they've seen frequently. Messages or words that might be used include reminders (e.g., holiday- no class tomorrow), jokes, phrases (have a good weekend), or other relevant information.

For example:

_ _ _ _ _

Blanks can be written on the blackboard or newsprint pad. A five letter word (such as 'beach') has five blank spaces. As learners guess the letters, their correct guesses go in the appropriate blank space; incorrectly guessed letters can be written below, so that learners won't guess them again.

_ e _ c _

f g r l s

Note: It's not really necessary to draw the 'hangman': in fact, this particular image is especially inappropriate for many ESL learners.

LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH -- The language experience approach (LEA) is a basic means for generating language in oral and written forms. People adapt and use the approach in many ways. *(A more detailed explanation of LEA for ESL learners appears in the ESL section of this handbook).*

What it is

Essentially, LEA consists of listening to learners' spoken language and writing it down (transcribing it into written form). Stories emerge from class conversation or discussion resulting from a picture or activity. Tutors listen carefully and draw out information. The learner tells a story, and the tutor (or other scribe) writes that story exactly as she hears it. After the story has been written, it is used as the learner's reading material for that particular session.

The rationale is that learning to read has to do with connecting previous knowledge of the world (i.e. experience) with print. Readers also use strategies such as inferring and predicting meaning based on that experience. Meaningful content and context is not only more interesting to learners, it is easier to retain. To illustrate, read this fragment and try to recollect it without looking back: *Pat put paper, peppers, potatoes and pots in planters to protect them.* Now read this: *Yesterday I went downtown buy shoes.* The example is exaggerated intentionally -- an emphasis only on phonics has little to do with meaningful content; a sentence describing a real event using high frequency words common and known to learners contains meaning and authentic vocabulary. Such a sentence forms a basis for generating writing that learners can and will want to read. Work on phonics (sound/symbol correspondences) and grammar forms is embedded in the content of the language generated by learners. In its purest form, LEA is an exact encoding of learners' words.

How to use it

LEA can be used with an individual learner in one on one tutoring or at a blackboard in a group learning situation. The story can be constructed by more than one person. One learner might begin to talk about something she remembers about a class party, for example. Others might then contribute their recollections until a paragraph (or several paragraphs, with more advanced learners) has been written. The tutor then invites learners to read the paragraph (and might invite them to read every two or three sentences as the story is being written).

With very beginning learners the story might consist of three or four short sentences. For example: *Last week I went to the library. It was cold outside. I took home a book for my son.* Once this story has been encoded, learners read it through several times, together and individually.

Although it may seem that hearing ten other people read the same passage would be tedious, learners remain engaged in the process -- watching, learning from and listening to others; preparing themselves for the trip to the newsprint or blackboard to read. The tutor has a chance to observe who helps who, who 'memorizes' a passage by reading one word while pointing to another, who wants to read first, and who needs encouragement from peers.

Building literacy activity from LEA

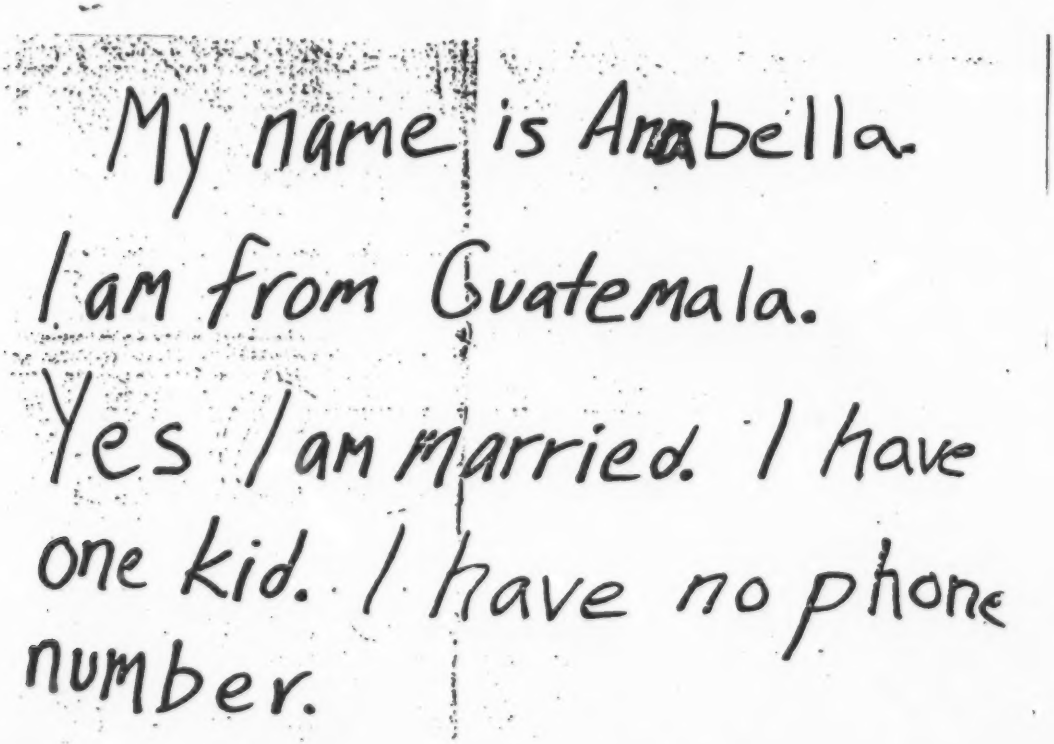
Once the story has been read, beginning level learners might spend a good amount of time copying it into their notebooks. The tutor might invite learners whose abilities to write lag behind their abilities to read to go to the text and circle 'book' or all the words that begin with a particular letter. The tutor may then encourage more advanced learners to add to the story, or write about their own particular experiences (at the library, or about the topic of the story).

For the next session the story can be typed and distributed to learners for review. Comprehension questions (was it cold outside?) may be added. Other open ended questions (Do you go to the library? Do you like the library?) may generate yet another round of language experience writing. This pattern can be repeated and can develop a constant source of new literacy material, vocabulary and grammatical examples.

Beginning learners might start with photos or other visual images which they label and learn. As they gain more written language, they move gradually away from visual to more written forms. Photos can be used initially for labelling purposes; later sentences and stories may be built from those pictures.

LEA can also be used to encourage learners to write by inviting them to each contribute one sentence to a general topic, such as: *Last week-end I . . .* Learners will each write one sentence about their weekend. Once learners have seen the process modeled -- the tutor listens, asks clarification questions, suggests words when needed and then encodes them -- learners take over the work of scribing with and for each other.

Many literacy activities derive from the Language Experience Approach. LEA all by itself is a starting point. It is important to move from initial fragments to complete sentences with correct grammar over time. It is unfair to send learners out into the world with only a private language, (full of misspellings, or irregular grammar usage) which LEA can become. LEA is a piece of the process of moving from learners' writing to standard English usage.



OPERATIONS -- similar to TPR (see below), operations are processes such as using a pay phone, making a sandwich, using a vending machine in which a procedure may be familiar to students, but the words used in English may be unfamiliar in their oral and/or written forms. Generating instructions (how to do one thing or another) and writing and then reading these steps may contribute to the kinds of literacy associated with following written instructions/directions, such as those found at laundromats, self-service businesses, airports, bus stations.

***For example*:**
Learners reconstruct the process of making coffee (or steaming rice, or preparing some other food or beverage that everyone usually consumes), listing the steps they use to make coffee until everyone agrees that all the steps have been completed. They write up the steps, and then, if facilities allow, complete the procedure they've just outlined. A good text for additional ideas and operations is Live Action English, from Prentice Hall/Alemany.

PAIR WORK -- students can be grouped randomly, advanced with beginner, beginner/beginner, advanced/advanced. The demands of a given task as well as learners' needs and abilities will indicate which group arrangement might work best. Learners might interview each other, read together, or work on writing exercises or information gaps. (In an information gap exercise, one learner has information that the other needs, and the other has information the first learner needs, such as locations of stores and places on a street map). Learners can also practice taking turns dictating and writing names, addresses, numbers, etc. with each other. (An excellent resource for this kind of pair work is Practice with Your Partner, by Linda Mrowicki.)

It's important to vary the groupings so that learners have an opportunity to participate both as learners and as teachers. Peer tutoring can evolve from beginner/advanced combinations, and also tends to evolve naturally across and within any level as students come to know each other and a supportive environment develops.

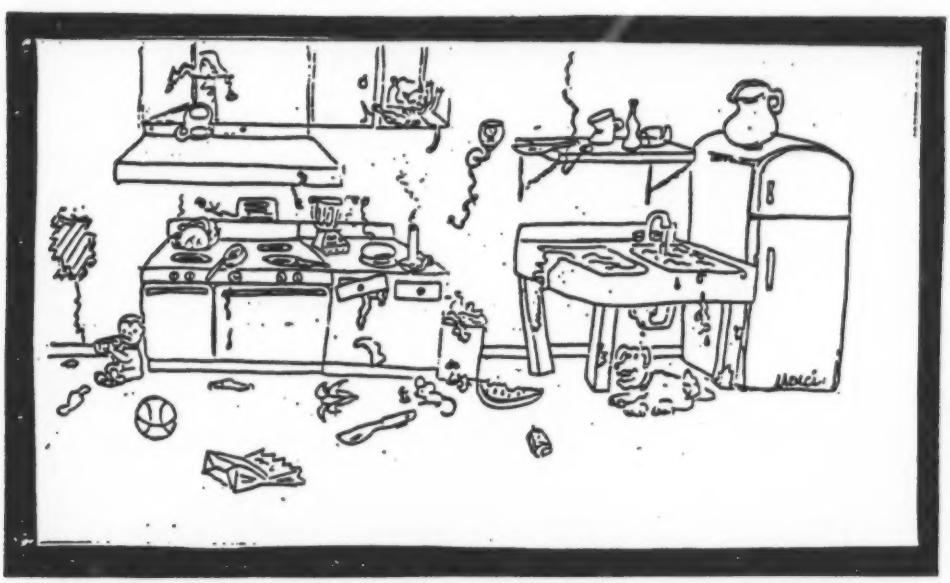
PHOTOS -- of family members, events, from magazines and newspapers (advertisements, local/national news), class events, etc. Photos are very useful in helping students generate language, which can then be developed in various ways according to your particular learners' needs. As learners become more comfortable with each other and with the learning process, spontaneous questions, answers and conversation increase. This oral language may be channeled in language experience writing, or labeling and other forms of written materials. (See also Visuals).

PICTURE STORIES -- focus upon a specific topic, or can be used to generate discussion around an issue or event. Language can be generated as with photos. Learners look at and discuss the story. New words can be written on the blackboard or newsprint, before the actual story is written out in sentences of phrases. Brainstorming, problem-posing and a variety of other activities can help the tutor elicit language from learners.

Brainstorming: Learners list ideas or events that are depicted in the picture story. They might look at the first four (out of eight) pictures and try to guess what might happen in the second half of the picture story.

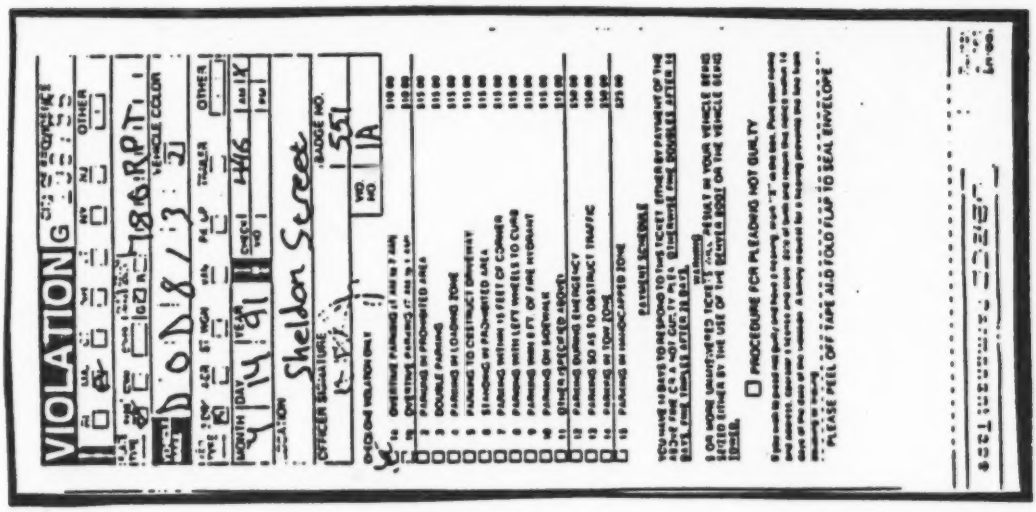
Problem-Posing: Learners might look at a picture depicting a potential hazard (such as Ligon's depiction of a kitchen littered with trash, and full of safety hazards) and discuss what might be done to help the the woman whose kitchen it is to clean up. How can someone tell someone else that their house may be unclean or unsafe? What is 'safe' or 'clean' in one culture and not in another? What would you do if you walked into a friend's kitchen and saw what is depicted in the story? Is this something that has happened to you? The pictures often spark discussion about related issues, (e.g. "no one could have a kitchen that dirty", but the overloaded electrical sockets, or the dangling cord from the hot coffee pot are more common problems).

Sequencing and scrambling exercises can be developed. Picture stories generally involve multiple images, which relate some event or problem. Fred Ligon's Picture Stories is one of the best published compilations currently available. Double Action Picture Cards, by Earl Stevick and Jane Yedlin, and Lexicarry, by Pat Moran are also useful drawings and visuals to which words can be added, and from which stories and other writings can be developed.



REALIA -- real objects. Junk mail, coupons, magazines, parking tickets, appointment cards, drivers' licenses, coins and paper money, food stamps, pay stubs, newspaper and other print advertisement, posters, flyers, report cards from children's schools. Any real (*'authentic'*) print encountered by adults in the course of day to day living. Learners might bring in bills or mail that they want to learn about or they might ask about billboards or other print they've seen. Realia can be tied into other ongoing themes and can also be connected to approaches listed here.

For example:



Learners can examine the parking ticket, and describe the information they can decipher from the ticket. Once everyone has discussed the ticket -- what it's for, how much the fine costs, etc., learners with cars might want to learn each others' license plate numbers, and write their own 'tickets' for each other. An extension activity might be describing and/or role play traffic court -- what happens when you plead 'not guilty' on a traffic ticket? What's the difference between a parking ticket and a speeding ticket?

SCRAMBLING/SEQUENCING – sentences, pictures, paragraphs. As with flashcards, language and/or images can be manipulated. Scrambling and sequencing work well within given topics and levels of complexity can vary within the class. (Beginners can unscramble/sequence short sentences, paragraphs, and more advanced students can do proportionately more).

For example:
Learners might generate a short story which they read, copy and review. The next day the teacher might ask a learner to reread the story and then using the sentences in the story, (and having copied them onto larger strips of paper), distribute the strips and ask learners to arrange them in the correct order.

I left this morning at 8:30. I went downtown. For lunch I ate a sandwich. I came home. I had supper at 7.

For lunch I ate a sandwich.

I went downtown.

I left this morning at 8:30.

I came home.

I had supper at 7.

for ate sandwich I a lunch.

I emac ohem. I dah pupsre ta 7.

This exercise can be adapted for many different levels. Learners need to handle many different levels of complexity in sequencing when they write for themselves. The type of scrambles you create needs to follow from the skill levels of the specific learners who you work with.

TPR: TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE – uses specific, simple instructions, with limited vocabulary, which demand a physical response. TPR can be used to help learners hear and respond to commands, such as 'please pick up the red pencil'. The tutor focuses on objects in the classroom vocabulary, prepositions, and verbs of motion. (e.g., 'Please put the book on the table').

A common use of TPR is to work with one key phrase (e.g. 'pick up the...') and to repeat it until learners are familiar with it. (The tutor asks learners to pick up objects the tutor points to). Once familiar with the phrase, learners can take over, and create small changes in the phrase. ('Put the pencil on the book' becomes 'put the pencil next to the book', and then 'put the pencil under the book.'). The complexity of the phrases develops with learners' ability to speak and their increases in confidence.

Learners respond to various requests that demand a physical response, (such as, 'go to the door'), without having to say or repeat them. Research shows that learners are most able to remember and re-use language when they are exposed to it in a context where the meaning is clear.

In *multi-level* settings, learners whose spoken language is more advanced might instruct other learners, using simple commands/ requests, or guiding them through simple processes (such as how to write a date). These commands can be given orally, or in writing. Literacy exercises may be done on the blackboard, or on flashcards. One word commands such as 'erase', 'write', 'read' can be used. Commands in both oral and written forms can grow in length and complexity as learners progress. Within the multilevel class both simple and more complex commands can be combined.

At all levels, with TPR, 'please' is important.

TPR relies more or less upon the premise that learners aren't asked to produce language until they are familiar and comfortable with it.

For example:
Learners can develop a procedure (see Operations, above) and then can instruct each other in completing the steps required within the operation. They can also practice smaller, more discrete skills, such as asking each other to give or take various objects, (e.g., give me the pen, take the pencil, pick up the quarter, give me two dimes and one nickel). This activity also helps learners with working out clarification questions and strategies, such as asking, "Penny or pencil?", pointing, gesturing, etc.

VISUALS -- photos, picture stories, and realia ('real' materials, such as coupons, junk mail, bank forms, drivers' licenses, etc.) can be used in various ways. Students can work individually, in pairs, in small groups or as a whole group developing LEA writing, asking or answering questions, describing (adjectives, comparatives, superlatives) using pronouns, and practicing verbs tenses. The possibilities are limitless. Visuals serve as useful codes for problem-posing at all levels, too.

For example:
If learners are willing to share their drivers licenses or other forms of photo ID, you can xerox them (enlarging them, if possible) and then generate questions with the learners, e.g., *How tall is [student a?].When is ____'s birthday? What's _____'s address?, etc.*

Using advertisements from newspapers, magazines, or direct mail, learners can discuss the relative merits of a given product, in terms of cost, usefulness, comparable products available at discount houses. They can write their own advertising copy, or discuss and write about why the product is not a good one. By asking learners about products they see in advertisement (Do you have/use this? Do you think this would be a good thing to have/use?), you gain a sense of what products would be interesting to them, which they'd like to learn about, discuss, criticize or try.

WRITING GROUPS -- The writing group approach to working with learners may work well for you if you are working with a group who can comfortably write and discuss more than a few sentences. Writing groups provide opportunities for community members to come together to write. Some of the writing produced appears in the Adult Academy's publication *Expressions*. More importantly, however, adult new readers and writers are engaged in a process of building community and using writing as a form of expression of their own thoughts and ideas.

Writing groups have facilitators who function somewhat like tutors in helping to guide the writers through the writing process, suggesting various activities aimed toward strengthening individuals' abilities to write clearly. Essentially, the work done in a writing group can be seen as an extension of the language experience approach process. A group leader brings in a topic for the day and presents it to the group, who discuss it. Everybody then writes for ten or twenty minutes on that topic. Writers share their work with others in the group, who ask questions, make suggestions and generally help each other to clarify and strengthen the writing they do. This group process is very important -- everyone participates as readers and writers of their own and of each other's work. For people who are newly learning to read and write, this process supports their learning. For others, the building of community is critical. For everyone, the process of writing, revising and sharing feelings and written work is an exciting process.

CHOOSING MATERIALS

Criteria
More important than the materials themselves is the criteria used for selecting them. The strongest materials offer flexibility in content, reading or interest level. They offer learners many ways to interact with text. Some texts use visuals so that learners may engage first through a visual image, develop their own pre-reading questions or even do some writing themselves prior to interacting with the text on the page. Other texts may provide less visual input but are of high interest or relevance to a given group of learners at a particular time. Other materials are not texts at all but rather print realia brought to class by learners: photos, post cards, flyers and other visual or print images of interest to the group. Regardless of the medium, it is the process through which these materials are used that will ultimately determine their usefulness. Naturally, some materials lend themselves better than others to literacy learning, but, by and large, almost any print bearing meaning or interest to learners can be useful.

When you examine materials, consider these questions:

Reading/Writing Level
How does the material 'read' visually? What does a page look like? What about print size, print density, the amount of white space on a page? Does it appear 'hard' to read? Does it look too easy or juvenile? Is the page too busy? How does the layout of the page -- illustrations, visuals -- enhance the text and help the reader into it?

Generating Interest
How do learners become engaged in interaction with print? Will pre-reading strategies help them develop schema through which to build understanding of the text they'll read, thereby increasing their ability to predict, infer and otherwise interact actively with the printed words (and visual images?) How do you select a reading for your learners? What opportunity or choice do they have in initiating or selecting reading materials?

Content
Are the themes and topics of interest to learners? Is the material presented in a culturally appropriate manner? Is it geared to adults? Is it interesting? Is it connected to events or experiences of interest to learners ?

Assumptions/Hidden Agendas (Between the Lines)
What messages are implicit from ways in which characters and events are depicted? Does the text portray adults in a negative light because of problems with language or literacy? Does the text assume that learners have prior knowledge of the world, and help them learn and work from their strengths? Is there evidence of bias -- racial, economic, social? Is one ethnic group perhaps illustrated in one way while another might be portrayed in a less sympathetic or realistic light?

Adaptability: Extending/Expanding
How can you use the materials? Can the learners use them independently, or are they designed for reading and writing with other learners? Is the book designed for group or individual learning (are there 'ask your partner' or other dyad exercises)? Is a text reliant upon a cassette tape? Can the text be adapted up or down a level to accommodate a multi-level class? Are you inspired by the text to develop new activities and exercises more suited to your specific learners?

Use of Photos/Visuals
Photos and other visual images are very effective in generating discussion, from which writing and reading activity evolves. Although learners' family photos and pictures of events often generate the most sustained interest, there are other sources of visuals which are useful for a variety of contexts.

Commercially Made Visuals
The following is a sample listing of several commercially produced visual materials designed for literacy and language learning.

Double Action Picture Cards by Jane Yedlin and Earl Stevick. Using oversized (20" by 14") black and white drawings, the cards depict common and not so common events in two sections (each of which can be viewed separately).

One card shows a family, in which two older people (parents?) are shown in their home, dressed up to go out. Their children are lined up in front of them. In and of itself the card can be used to start discussion about families and social customs: baby sitters, large/ small families, going out, etc. However, in conjunction with its other picture (the *double action*), wherein the children are running wild all over the house and street, one can add in a discussion of attitudes towards obedience, child proofing and general household safety, appropriate behavior (whatever that may be). One can ask, "What do you think will happen?" after looking at the first card and thus lead into the second. Or, one can use either card by itself. An instructor's guide lists suggested language/grammar activities to complement the cards. For learners who are able to 'read' drawings, the cards lend themselves to any number of language experience and literacy centered activities.

Picture Dictionaries and Wall Charts : Oxford has produced a Picture Dictionary in both English and bilingual versions covering predictable topics -- body parts, rooms of the house (generally well appointed houses -- not apartments), clothing, maps, animals, cars, etc. The dictionaries use full page drawings of settings and/or objects, and number each object within a picture. The written words appear on the page in numerical order beneath the picture.

Longman Photo Dictionary covers comparable topics, with the obvious advantage of using photographs which might be easier to decipher than drawings. Again, the mainstream/middle class images may work both as catalysts of discussion or simply as descriptive renderings of objects and events. The photo dictionary wall charts are particularly useful for their images of supermarkets, common fast foods, body parts and colors.

Richard Toglia and others produced Picture It! This book has sequenced illustrations of daily activities ('Morning Routine', 'A Doctor's Office'). Learners develop written and/or spoken language to describe the pictures. After each section there are sample phrases describing the pictures, and one or two developmental activities.

Use of Audio and Videotape: Learner/Teacher Ongoing Assessment
When possible or available, taping classes allows the practitioner to observe learner interaction from a distance. When videotaping, focus on learners provides the best information. The facilitator is heard, and not seen. Viewing the tape provides insight to learners and facilitators about their own progress (show a tape you made three months ago). Learners also enjoy watching a tape immediately after it's been made. Audio tapes, though less satisfying in some ways also provide a very objective description of classroom interaction.

Learner Generated Publications
Voices: New Writers for New Readers: A magazine of learners' writings published by the Invergarry Learning Centre in Vancouver. Ranging from 'new voices' to 'transitions' to 'later writings', the magazine is published three times yearly and includes autobiographical statements, letters in response to previous writings and reviews of films and books. 9260 140th Street Surrey, British Columbia, V3V 5Z4 Canada.

Expressions: A bi-weekly journal of learners' writings gathered from local (Rhode Island and Massachusetts) literacy programs. Available in journal or book form through the Adult Academy.

Looking Forward, Looking Back, Writings from Many Worlds: ESL/literacy learners' writings from the Family Literacy Project at UMass/Boston, 1989.

Need I Say More: ESL/literacy learners' writings, through the Adult Literacy Resource Institute, 989 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02215.

Street Voices: Learners' writings, generated by learners in Traveler's Aid literacy programs in Providence.

Publishers

The following is a list of several publishers that produce books and materials especially designed for adult literacy and language learning.

- Cambridge University Press, 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011
- Contemporary Books, Inc., Department AB93, Two Prudential Plaza, Suite 1200
  180 North Stetson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60601
- Heinle & Heinle Publishers, 20 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116
- Jamestown Publishers, P.O. Box 9168, Providence, RI 02940
- Linmore Publishing, Box 1545, Palatine, Illinois 60078
- Longman Publishing Group, 95 Church Street, White Plains, NY 10601
- New Readers Press, Department 82, P.O. Box 888, Syracuse, NY 13210
- Prentice Hall Regents, 113 Sylvan Avenue, Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632
- Pro Lingua Associates, 15 Elm Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301
- Steck-Vaughn Company, P.O. Box 26015, Austin, TX 78755